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Chen Shao-Ming, Nader El-Bizri, Leo Marx, Jean-Bernard Ouedraogo, Vinay Kumar Srivastava and Pierre Zaoui *Keywords Nature*	***hilesh Ranjan***	142
Geoffrey A Oddie *Imagined Hinduism British Protestant missionary constructions of Hinduism, 1793-1900*	***M Rajivlochan***	144
Govinda Chandra Rath (ed) *Tribal development in India The contemporary debate*	***Susanuna Isac***	146
Jaspal Singh *Sociology of organisation Strategy for removing poverty*	***Indu Shekhar***	148
Navnita Chadha Behera (ed) *Gender, conflict and migration*	***Madhu Nagla***	150
Paramjit S Judge *Religion, identity and nationhood*	***Satish K Sharma***	152
Patricia Uberoi *Freedom and destiny Gender, family and popular culture in India*	***Kulwinder Kaur***	154
Phoebe S Liebig and S Irudaya Rajan (eds) *An aging India Perspectives, prospects and policies*	***Kiran Puri***	157
Ronnie Vernooy (ed) *Social and gender analysis in natural resource management Learning studies and lessons from Asia*	***Aditya K Mishra***	159
R S Khare (ed) *Caste, hierarchy, and individualism Indian critiques of Louis Dumont's contributions*	***Ramesh Bairy T S***	161
Saraswati Raju, M Satish Kumar and Stuart Corbridge (eds) *Colonial and post-colonial geographies of India*	***Abdul Shaban***	163
Vasudha Dhagamwar *Role and image of law in India The tribal experience*	***Rukmini Sen***	165
Books Received		168

KP 2691

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SOCIOLOGICAL BULLETIN
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ARTICLES

Bourdieu's Theory of the Symbolic and the Shah Bano Case
– ***Sheena Jain*** 3

Women Research Scholars in IITs
Impact of Social Milieu and Organisational Environment
– ***Namrata Gupta*** 23

Matrilateral Cross-Cousin Marriage among the Chothe of Manipur
– ***Cheithou Charles Yuhlung*** 46

Strengthening and Sustaining Vitality of Urban Areas
The Case of North-West India
– ***Manoj Kumar Teotia*** 65

Gram Panchayat and Health Care Delivery in Himachal Pradesh
– ***Sthitapragyan Ray*** 88

The Gender Gap in Literacy and Education among the Scheduled Tribes
in Jharkhand and West Bengal
– ***Arun Kumar Ghosh*** 109

DISCUSSION

M N Srinivas, Max Weber, and Functionalism
– *A.M Shah* 126

Response to Shah
– *T N Madan* 134

BOOK REVIEWS

Avijit Pathak *Modernity, globalisation and identity Towards a reflexive quest* ***Rajesh Gill*** 136

Carol Schick, JoAnn Jaffe and Alisa M Watkinson (eds) *Contesting fundamentalisms* ***Kulbir Kaur*** 138

Cecilia Ng and Swasti Mitter (eds) *Gender and the digital economy Perspectives from the developing world* ***Anita Dash*** 140

SOCIOLOGICAL BULLETIN
56 (1), January – April 2007, 3-22
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Bourdieu's Theory of the Symbolic and the Shah Bano Case

Sheena Jain

This article explores the power and scope of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the symbolic by viewing the Shah Bano case through its conceptual lens In the process, the heuristic value of Bourdieu's concepts of doxa, orthodoxy and heterodoxy, of the state, and of symbolic violence and misrecognition are revealed Some of the limitations of his theory also come to light, and suggestions are made as to how these can be overcome

[Keywords symbolic, doxa, orthodoxy, heterodoxy, misrecognition, violence]

Introduction

Bourdieu's theory of the symbolic, and the theory of practice of which it forms a part, are products of a rigorous dialectic between conceptual traditions and innovations, on the one hand, and empirical observations of particular social realities, on the other The epistemological status conferred on them by Bourdieu is that of universally valid frameworks of analysis, capable of yielding sociological truths in diverse empirical contexts This assertion is qualified by the understanding that the theories are not closed, but open-ended constructs, and thus subject to change and modification when demanded by subsequent research They are constituted by conceptual tools that are heuristic devices to be used as such This quality of Bourdieu's contribution prompts one to undertake the exercise of exploring in a preliminary way the strengths and limitations of his theory of the symbolic by viewing it in relation to the symbolic aspects of a selected social reality distinct from the ones analysed by

Bourdieu himself[1] The reality I have chosen pertains to an event involving the rights of women in India, namely, the Shah Bano case In what follows, I will explore how far Bourdieu's theory of the symbolic goes towards illuminating its reality, examining in particular the fruitfulness of the following conceptions (i) the notion of differentiated societies as characterised by doxa, orthodoxy, and heterodoxy, (ii) the definition of the state as an institution having a monopoly over legitimate symbolic violence, and (iii) the understanding that subordinate social groups, including women, are subject to symbolic violence involving a process of misrecognition

As a prologue to the exercise of viewing, through the lens of his conceptual framework, an event located in particular time and space dimensions, I would like to briefly outline Bourdieu's concept of history According to Bourdieu, every historical action brings together two states of history *objectified history,* that is, the history which has accumulated over the passage of time in things, machines, buildings, monuments, books, theories, customs, law, etc , and *embodied* or *internalised history,* in the form of habitus The concept of habitus refers, in Bourdieu's oeuvre, to systematic propensities to perceive, think, evaluate and act in certain ways, embodied in individuals, but shared by all those living in similar social and material conditions The habitus is the product of a historical acquisition, which makes it possible to appropriate the legacy of history This is so in the sense that

> the institution or objectified, instituted history, becomes historical action, that is, enacted active history, only if it is taken in charge by agents whose own history predisposes them to do so, who, by virtue of their previous investments, are inclined to take an interest in its functioning, and endowed with the appropriate attributes to make it function (Bourdieu 1981 305-06)

The structures of objectified history constitute part of what Bourdieu calls fields, and the relation between habitus and field is conceptualised as two modes of the existence of history The concept of fields refers to relatively autonomous structures of relations between agents that emerge in specific socio-historical contexts They are the site of struggles between agents, with their own particular stakes and rewards, and their own logic Bourdieu clarifies that the notion of field implies transcending the conventional opposition between structure and history, conservation and transformation, since fields are sites of struggle, and the relations of power which form their structures provide the underpinnings of both resistance to domination and resistance to subversion

Moreover, to see how struggles account for a transformation of structures, one needs to enter into the details of particular historical conjunctures and analyse the positions in the structure In fact, Bourdieu argues for a form of structural history, 'which finds in each successive state of the structure under examination both the product of previous struggles to maintain or transform this structure, and the principle, via the contradictions, the tensions, and the relations of force which constitute it, of subsequent transformations' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992 89-91) Indeed history, or time, is at the centre of Bourdieu's analysis, in that it is built into his conceptualisation of social space Thus, the model of structure of social space put forth in his study, *Distinction,* for example, is a three dimensional one in addition to the volume and structure of capital possessed by social agents, it takes into account the evolution over time of these two properties

By viewing the relation between habitus and field as two modes of existence of history, Bourdieu is able to found a theory of time that breaks with two opposed philosophies of time on the one hand, 'the metaphysical vision which treats time as a reality in itself, independent of the agent (as in the metaphor of the river) and, on the other hand, a philosophy of consciousness' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992 138) This is because 'far from being a condition a priori and transcendent to historicity, time is what practical activity produces in the very act whereby it produces itself' (*ibid*) At the same time,

> Practice need not – except by way of exception – explicitly constitute the future as such, as in a project or a plan posited through a conscious and deliberate act of will Practical activity, in so far as it *makes sense,* as it is *sensee,* reasonable, that is, engendered by a habitus adjusted to the immanent tendencies of the field, is an act of temporalisation through which the agent transcends the immediate present in a practical mobilisation of the past and practical anticipation of the future inscribed in the present in a state of objective potentiality' (*ibid*)

We may note here that Bourdieu, while excluding the category of subject, which is central to philosophies of consciousness, does not exclude agents For, it is as active participants in historical action that agents either reproduce or transform structures, even as they are products of these structures Thus, social agents are the product of history, of the history of the social field and of the accumulated experience of a path within the specific subfield But they also make history

Bearing in mind this conception of history, and the overall aim of this paper, which is to view the Shah Bano case in the light of Bourdieu's

theory of the symbolic, I will proceed next to an account of the case and then move on to its analysis

The Shah Bano Case

The Shah Bano case refers to the events that followed from a criminal appeal in the Supreme Court of India by appellant Mohammed Ahmed Khan against respondents Shah Bano Begum and others in 1985 The appeal was a response to an application filed by Shah Bano, a divorced Muslim woman, for maintenance under Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC)

Shah Bano was married to Mohammad Ahmed Khan in 1932, had borne him three sons and two daughters, and was driven out of her matrimonial home in 1975 In April 1978, she filed an application against her husband asking for maintenance and, in November 1978 she was divorced by him by an irrevocable *talaq* permitted under the personal law of the Muslims He defended himself against Shah Bano's petition for maintenance by stating that she had ceased to be his wife after the divorce, that he had paid a maintenance allowance for two years and deposited a sum of Rs 3,000 by way of dower as per Muslim personal law during the period of *iddat* (which normally is three menstrual cycles or the passage of three lunar months for post-menopausal women) The Judicial Magistrate of the concerned High Court did, however, sanction a small sum to be paid as maintenance in terms of Section 125 of the CrPC, and following a revised petition, the sum was raised nominally It was then that the husband appealed to the Supreme Court

The Supreme Court ruled that a Muslim woman unable to maintain herself was entitled to take recourse to Section 125 of the CrPC that requires husbands with sufficient means to pay maintenance to wives or ex-wives who are unable to support themselves The ruling was based on the understanding that Muslim personal law, which limits the husband's liability to provide maintenance to a divorced woman for the period of *iddat* does not deal with a situation of destitution, the prime concern of the provisions of the CrPC

The judgement provoked widespread consternation in the Muslim community in the country The *ulema* (Muslim clerics) condemned the judgement as an attempt to undermine the *Shariat,* the source of Islamic law A large number of Muslims took to the streets to register their protest, accusing the Supreme Court of trespassing on their domain What added to their outrage was the reference in the judgement to the desirability of evolving a uniform civil code, which questioned the suitability of Muslim personal law, as indeed of all religious personal

law, as an agency capable of fostering national integration This was viewed as a position contrary to the principles of secularism on the basis of which different communities were bound together in India, and as particularly threatening to the Muslims, who as a minority community, had for long, sought through the preservation of personal law, a means of protecting their self identity

The leadership of the movement came from the *ulema* and the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB), an organisation established in 1974 They were joined by several other Muslim organisations, and by Muslim politicians in centrist parties, such as the Congress and the Janata Dal They mobilised Muslims in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, and their campaign spread through religious institutions, mosques, newspapers, and local community leaders While initially, when it focused on the issue of maintenance rights for women, the movement failed to gain popular support, it gained momentum towards the end of 1985, when it shifted to the much larger issue of the status of the Muslim minority and its right to exist as a religious community in a secular society Passions were aroused with protests against interference with Muslim personal law and by the fuelling of fears of its substitution by a common civil law, which, it was suggested, would spell the death warrant of Muslim identity in Hindu India

In April 1985, G M Banatwala, a Muslim League member from Kerala, introduced a private bill in Parliament to ensure the continuance of the regime of personal law In May, six Muslim organisations issued a joint statement expressing fear of the extinction of personal law The Secretary of the AIMPLB explicitly demanded that the government should nullify the judgement by reiterating its commitment to uphold the Muslim personal law The organisation warned the government that 'it would be unwise and against the interests of national unity to arouse fears and apprehensions and to create a sense of religious insecurity' (Zoya Hasan 1989 46) Numerous public meetings were held in the course of the *Shariah* week launched in October 1985, culminating in the observation of the All India Shariah Day, marked by street-corner meetings and demonstrations Doctrinal differences between organisations were underplayed to safeguard personal law, as were regional and class divisions among Muslims Towards the end of 1985, the fundamentalists persuaded Shah Bano to hold a press conference, where she put her thumb impression on a statement demanding that the Supreme Court withdraw its verdict as it amounted to interference in the Muslim personal law (Engineer 1987 63)

However, even as this fundamentalist tide grew, a large number of Muslims saw no conflict between the Supreme Court verdict and Islamic principles Significantly, it has been noted that many Muslim women were unaffected by the tide and supported the demand for maintenance rights provided under the CrPC Women who were initially unaware of the maintenance issue became conscious of it as the campaign against the judgement gained momentum Muslim women groups in Kerala, West Bengal, Mumbai and Delhi reaffirmed the right of maintenance and criticised the *mullah*s for making religion an instrument of injustice The formation of the committee for the Protection of the Rights of Muslim Women in Kolkata, Thiruvananthapuram and Delhi gave organised expression to such sentiments It organised public meetings and conventions in different parts of the country to highlight the issue of women's rights, and submitted memoranda to the Prime Minister emphasising the need to protect all sections of the minorities, particularly women (Zoya Hasan 1989 47) These stirrings of protest were strengthened by voices from within the Muslim intelligentsia Important sections of enlightened and liberal Muslim opinion, drawn from the educated and professional classes, signed a memorandum demanding the preservation of the right of a divorced Muslim woman to claim maintenance from her former husband (*ibid*) In short, the claims of some Muslim leaders that the community was unanimously opposed to the Supreme Court verdict in favour of maintenance were false

As regards the government, the ruling Congress Party initially welcomed the Supreme Court verdict, and the Prime Minister was openly supportive of the Union Home Minister Arif Mohammed Khan, who denounced the Banatwala Bill in Parliament However, the defeat of the Congress Party in the by-elections in December 1985 'led the government to execute a volte-face' (*ibid*) Fearful of further electoral reverses, the government initiated several moves to assuage Muslim feelings Thus, members of the AIMPLB were summoned to Delhi for consultation, Ali Mian, the *alim* of the Lucknow Seminary, Nadvatal-ulma, was assiduously cultivated, and the Prime Minister found time to attend the All Momin Conference where he assured his audience that the Muslim personal law will not be modified or altered In May 1986, the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill, 1985, was introduced in Parliament (*ibid*)

The Bill denied Muslim women the option to avail of Section 125 of the CrPC It legitimised the arguments of the AIMPLB and the Muslim League that a woman's natal family should maintain her after her divorce and not the husband as she has ceased to be his wife It provided that the inheritors of her property would be responsible for her maintenance in

accordance with the property to be inherited, without fixing the amount of property to be inherited by the divorced woman Where a divorced woman has no relatives or any one of them does not have enough means to pay the maintenance, it was decreed that the State Wakf Board would pay

In passing the Bill, the government had clearly surrendered to fundamentalist pressures The Bill was widely criticised, and women's organisations mobilised public opinion, highlighting gender identity and the need to safeguard the rights of women They pointed out how women's identity often gets subsumed in the larger issue of community identity Their intervention restored the focus on women, and exposed the subordinate and unequal position of women within the family, that is, with reference to personal laws, and in the public realm, where, for example, women could not avail of Section 125 of the CrPC because that would supposedly threaten community identity (*ibid* 48) Street-corner meetings, protest marches and signature campaigns were organised, but the government refused to recognise the strength of Muslim opposition to the Bill

It has been pointed out that the most important factor which made the government take such a stance was the need to stem the anger over the Shah Bano verdict, which was losing the Congress its Muslim votes Moreover, the Bill was a sequel to the communal pressures mounted by Hindu organisations agitating for the reopening of the Babri Masjid Ram Janam Bhoomi temple in Ayodhya The temple was opened in February 1986 to appease and conciliate the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Ram Janam Bhoomi Mukti Samiti, and at this point, Muslim communal leaders threatened to boycott the Congress if the Babri Masjid was not restored to Muslims The Muslim Women Bill was an effort to pacify ruffled Muslim sentiments over the reopening of the disputed Babri Masjid and the conservative objections to the Supreme Court verdict As Zoya Hasan comments, 'In this way the Indian State performed a balancing act of accommodating and according protection to all religions and religious sentiments under the umbrella of multi-theocratic pluralism and an ideology of secularism that encourages and protects all religions' (*ibid* 48) Furthermore, she notes that the most pernicious aspect of the controversy was the attempt by the government to defend the AIMPLB sponsored Bill (which would clearly debilitate and deprive the Muslim community) and lament the absence of reformist tendencies among Muslims at the same time (*ibid*) But, while the responsibility of the Muslim Women's Bill was transferred to the Muslim fundamentalists, in effect, it was an attempt to mollify them

Analysis

To see what light Bourdieu's theory of the symbolic sheds on this case, we need to note that the realm of the symbolic refers, in his work, to mental structures, including schemes and categories of perception, thought, evaluation, and action, both conscious and unconscious, as well as to activities, institutions, and objects pertaining to the same (Bourdieu 1998 40, 46, 53, 54, 56, and 121) We can begin the exercise by asking whether the concepts of doxa, orthodoxy, and heterodoxy provide useful tools for analysing how the events related to the case unfolded This means considering the available empirical evidence regarding the mental make-up of the litigants involved, of the judges in the context of the judgement proclaimed, and of the *dramatis personae* who participated in the response to the judgement It may be noted that doxa refers to the ensemble of common opinions, established beliefs, and received ideas, which remain undiscussed Orthodoxy may be defined as a system of euphemisms, of acceptable ways of thinking and speaking the natural and social world, which rejects heretical remarks as blasphemies Heterodoxy refers to the existence of competing possibilities in the field of opinion

To look at Shah Bano's actions first they have to be viewed against the backdrop of her biographical trajectory in a milieu characterised by a subordinate position for women which went into the constitution of her habitus Illiterate and aging, abandoned by her husband, and living with one of her three grown-up sons, it is unlikely that her legal application for maintenance was based on a conscious decision to fight for her rights It was more likely the product of an acceptance in the doxic mode of what the significant males in her immediate milieu dictated she do Regarding their motives in prompting her to do so, it may realistically be doubted if she would have had much control even over the meagre sum which she would have been given as maintenance, had she not retracted her claim This is likely even as her sons were well off enough to be able to support her Indeed, as journalist Saeed Naqvi has noted, the maintenance claim by Shah Bano followed a series of disputes on the ownership of certain properties, largely inspired by the sons (see Engineer 1987 68) Thus what was important in Shah Bano's case of adopting her earlier stance, and of later retracting from it, was not a consciousness of the legal or perhaps even religious correctness or incorrectness of the particular positions taken, but the fact that they were authorised by significant persons – all males – who she was subordinate to The doxa that governed her actions made her consistent even when apparently inconsistent

We can also discern the element of misrecognition involved, when we consider her statement to the effect that she was following the dictates of a religious consciousness in changing her stance For, this was in conformity with the orthodox discourse of Muslim clerics which was put up in response to the heterodoxy of the legal verdict and of certain currents of public opinion While Shah Bano's interests as a woman were thus thwarted, it was precisely her gendered subjectivity that made her complicit in what happened

Incidentally, the fact that the concept of habitus, which takes into account individual variations in skills and experience has greater explanatory power than the Durkheimian concept of 'collective consciousness' becomes apparent if we compare Shah Bano's actions to those of another divorced Muslim woman, Shehnaz Sheikh, subject to the pressures of a similar milieu Unlike Shah Bano, the young and educated Shehnaz Sheikh, did not succumb to these pressures, but instead took up the cause of Muslim women, and formed an organisation for the same This was after she petitioned the Supreme Court, challenging the discrimination against women inherent in Muslim personal law on issues of polygamy, divorce, maintenance, custody of children and inheritance (Menon 1994)

As for the actions of Shah Bano's husband, Mohammad Ahmad Khan, it must be borne in mind that he was a lawyer with substantial earnings, for whom the payment of maintenance would not have caused great financial hardship What seems more pertinent is the reference to the limitations of Muslim personal law in the Supreme Court judgement, which ignited the whole issue of the infallibility or otherwise of the *Shariat* and of certain interpretations of it, and its implications for the status of the Muslim community in India As a Muslim lawyer, Mohammad Ahmad Khan was perhaps only too conscious, in appealing under Muslim personal law, of these implications, including the role they had played in legal discourse in India so far, and even more, of the socio-political support from sections of the Muslim Community that such an appeal carried His actions stemmed from a calculated bet on the strength of the orthodoxy characterising certain sections of the Muslim community which had figured in legal debates in modern India, and which was very likely a part of his habitus anyway The calculation involved in his actions was not strictly speaking rational calculation, but the activation of a practical sense Thus, it is significant that, as has been noted, since he had appealed under Muslim personal law and lost, he became an instant hero among the more conservative *maulvi* elements (Engineer 1987 68)

As regards the Supreme Court judgement on the case, a notable feature is the fact that, in the course of upholding the High Court decision

on the provision of maintenance to Shah Bano, it also commented upon several other issues, and we will consider its various components here With reference to strictly legal aspects, the judgement drew upon colonial legislation, citing the speech of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, who had piloted the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1872 as Legal Member of the Viceroy's Council It clarified the purport of the relevant sections of the Code within which Section 125 occurred, which, significantly, is not concerned with individual rights, but with 'prevention of vagrancy' as a threat to public order As Veena Das comments, 'The creation of a legal category of vagrants, as well as the criminalisation of "close relatives" who could be held responsible for supporting indigent relatives, reflected the basic opposition of colonial rulers to the maintenance of unproductive populations' (1995 97) Within the framework of modern law, which is a product of heterodox discourse, the judgement thus conformed to colonial orthodoxy on strictly legal issues

In supporting itself against an appeal based on Muslim personal law, however, the judgement went on to the terrain of heterodox beliefs and opinions. It questioned the role of religion as protector of the interests of women, it contested the interpretation of the sacred legal texts offered, and it spoke of the desirability of a common civil code 'to help the cause of national integration by removing disparate loyalties to law which have conflicting ideologies' (Engineer 1987 33) This heterogeneity, Das (1995 95) observes, allowed the judgement to become a signifier of issues which touch upon several dimensions, including the nature of secularism, the rights of minorities, and the use of law as an instrument of securing justice for the oppressed It is reasonable to suppose that the judges concerned had certain convictions with regard to all these issues, and that these convictions formed part of the existing heterodox discourse associated with certain individuals and groups in modern India Its constituent elements can be analysed briefly as follows

The unjust treatment of women in religion was illustrated in the opening paragraph of the judgement by quoting from Manu, followed by a statement by Sir William Lane made in 1840, to the effect that the fatal point in Islam is its degradation of women (Engineer 1987 23) Das very perceptively identifies the semiotic function of this manner of framing things, which was 'to establish the secular and learned credentials of the judges, for, by a time-honoured tradition in our political culture, secular credentials are signalled by handing out in an even manner criticisms of the majority community and minority community' (1995 98)

As regards the exercise undertaken in the judgement, of examining Islam's position on the issue of maintenance, it is significant that this was not strictly relevant to the legal judgement pronounced For, stating

that Section 125 was part of the Code of Criminal Procedures, and not of Civil Law, the judges asserted that they were not concerned with the broad and general question of whether a Muslim husband was liable to maintain his wife, including a divorced wife, under all conditions The correct subject matter of Section 125 related to a wife who was unable to maintain herself, and their ruling was limited to such a case Clearly, given the fact that there is a uniform criminal code to which all Indian citizens are subject, the court could not take into account the religion of the persons involved (*ibid* 97)

Yet, the judgement did examine the question of whether there was any conflict between the provisions of Section 125 and those of the Muslim personal law on the liability of the Muslim husband to provide for the maintenance of his divorced wife For this, it drew upon legal texts and the Quran, and came to the conclusion that there was no conflict The process by which the judges arrived at this conclusion involved opening up to scrutiny the legal orthodoxy that existed in text-books on Muslim law That this exercise provoked such strong reactions from sections of the Muslim community, not all of whom, it may be realistically supposed, were acquainted with these texts, testifies to the extent to which this orthodoxy had become the doxa – unquestioned and taken for granted – for part of the community Even more powerful was the typical stance of all orthodoxy that characterised the response, which was to not countenance any questioning whatsoever of its contents – and to term any exercise of scrutiny an interference or even blasphemy (Bourdieu 1986 167-68)

Moreover, it would be naive to restrict our analysis of this phenomenon to the realm of discourse alone For as Bourdieu points out, where there is a correspondence between mental structures and social structures, systems of classification are political instruments which contribute to the reproduction of the social world (*ibid* 164) Indeed, this conceptualisation of the political efficacy of the link between symbolic structures and social structures gives a critical edge to Bourdieu's analysis of the symbolic Thus, the disadvantageous position of women in legal orthodoxy, only served to reinforce and to contribute to the reproduction of their subordinate position in the community Nevertheless, as the differentiated reaction to the judgement, even within the Muslim community shows, the orthodox response was not an attempt to legitimise doxa in a vacuum, but was a response to the constitution of a field of opinion, which included heterodoxy The judgement partook of this heterodox discourse, whose voice could be heard in several other responses to the judgement as well

As regards its perspective on the need to evolve a common civil code, the judgement articulated a stance conforming to one of the major strands in heterodox discourse on the issue of secularism in modern India Insofar as it posited a contradiction between the existence of a plurality of personal laws based on religion and the interests of the oppressed and of national integration, it represented what may be termed a position of militant secularism However, it is significant that while positing this, 'there is no attempt in the judgement to explain why different ideologies in the sphere of personal life are seen as intrinsically threatening to national integration' (Das 1995 99) Also, the question of the rights of women is 'raised but then totally eclipsed by the allegiance to abstractions like public order and national integration' (*ibid* 100)

Questioning the version of secularism associated with the proposal for a uniform civil code further, Zoya Hasan (1998 116) points out that the notion of national integration on which it is based, and whose development can be traced back to the debates in the Constituent Assembly on the same, is not that of the principle of citizenship or the equitable distribution of resources As this suggests, there is, in contrast both to the position of the militant secularists and the orthodoxy of those in favour of unreformed personal laws, an alternative position in the field of opinion This is that of secularism in favour of a legal pluralism based on a reform of personal laws in the light of the principles of justice and equality, including gender justice

That the demand for a uniform civil code was appropriated by Hindu communalists, so that 'women's right is subordinated to imperatives of unity defined by majoritarianism and pluralism defined in terms of minority rights' reflects the extreme vulnerability of the position of women in processes of the constitution and exercise of law, a vulnerability whose specificity the overall text of the judgement does not take into account, despite its ruling in favour of Muslim women (*ibid* 117) The occlusion of women from the terms of the competing discourses was almost total It also draws attention to an absence in Bourdieu's theory of conceptual tools for analysing the phenomenon of conflicting and competing orthodoxies in society as are found in the case of communal ideologies in India It would not do to subsume them under the category of heterodox discourse, for they are characterised by a defensiveness, rigidity and resistance to dialogue, which are typical of orthodoxy Neither would it do to see them as ultimately the same, or as subspecies of a general orthodoxy, since they are manifestly hostile to each other, with this hostility affecting social processes significantly, even as they play a similarly regressive role in society

It may be argued, however, that while in his schematic presentation of the concept in his *Outline of a Theory of Practice,* Bourdieu presents orthodoxy 'as a singular phenomenon opposed to heterodoxy, its rendering is far more complex in his various subsequent analyses of the cultural field (see Bourdieu 1986 268, 1993) In them, there appear struggles between producers with their products to attain to the position of orthodoxy, that is, in Max Weber's terms, claims to the legitimate and monopolised use of a certain class of symbolic goods (Bourdieu 1993 116) This suggests a preliminary framework within which communal discourses and practices could possibly be analysed However, the specificities of the phenomenon of communalism in India would shape the concept, as much as its analysis would be aided by its use

To return to the Shah Bano case to understand the orthodox response to the judgement better, it is necessary to see how it was shaped by the existence of a relatively autonomous political field For, the construction of a discourse and doxa that regards Muslim identity as being based on adherence to infallible Islamic personal laws is a historical construction produced in the context of actors and organisations participating in political processes characterising modern Indian history This becomes clear when we observe that the common sense among certain sections of the Muslim community that Muslim identity is equal to Muslim personal law, papers over the heterogeneity, which is the true condition of the Muslims in India – heterogeneity of region, class, caste and culture In this sense, orthodoxy is a creation which does not preserve an initial doxa but which creates a new doxa In the process, misrecognition occurs the diversion of people from their real interests, to the defence of a symbolic entity which furthers the interests of clerics and politicians, being thereby an instance of the exercise of symbolic violence by them

Thus, apart form the hold of orientalist clichés that projected Islam as providing a complete identity, explanation and oral code for Muslims, and colonial stereotypes of an Islamic community organised on a pan-Indian or transnational basis, as well as mythical portrayals of Muslim unity in nationalist discourse, what is of particular relevance to us is the existence of practitioners of modern day politics 'who purported to represent the "millat", or the "community" as a whole, but were actually exploiting Islam and communitarian solidarity as a shield to cover their political designs' (Mushirul Hasan 1997 51) That the Indian state was responsive to pressures from such politicians is, of course, a significant fact, which we will discuss when we examine the notion of the state as an agency with a monopoly over legitimate symbolic violence What is important from the point of view of understanding the orthodox response

to the case is the presence of organisations with a leadership that had sought to carve out a place for itself in Indian politics through mobilisations on the issue of Islamic law

Among the organisations which condemned the judgement as interference in Muslim personal law were the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, the Jamait-ul-Ulema-Hind, the Jamait-e-Islami, the Muslim League, and the Muslim Majlis Mushawarat While the first is an apex body of several Muslim organisations committed to upholding the sanctity of Muslim personal law, the other organisations are marked by the existence of doctrinal differences between them Thus, to compare the Jamait-ul-Ulema-Hind and the Jamait-e-Islami for instance the Jamait-ul-Ulema-Hind, which took the lead in demanding restoration of the Islamic laws, was founded in 1919 by a group of influential *ulama* from Deoband It had worked closely with the Congress in the anti-colonial struggle and in the post-independence period, it held that both in theory and in practice, democracy and secularism adequately safeguarded and guaranteed the religio-political interests of Muslims Its leadership, at least up to the 1970s, was secure in the belief that an enduring Congress-Muslim alliance was the way out of post-Partition conflicts In the 1970s, the breakdown of the secular consensus and the spurt in Hindu-Muslim violence across large tracts of the country 'led the jamiyat to invoke specifically Muslim themes of "solidarity", "unity" and "identity", and to organise Muslims in pursuit of religio-political goals' (*ibid* 213-14)

As for the Jamait-e-Islami, it was established in 1941 and has as its goal in India and elsewhere in South Asia, the one of seizing the commanding heights of the state and Islamising state and society Mushirul Hasan describes it as a retrograde force, 'steeped in religious conservatism and opposed to the "modernising" processes in education, social reforms and the emancipation of women' Furthermore, he notes that 'its world view militates against liberal, progressive and enlightened ideas because of an inflexible interpretation of Islamic doctrines and stout resistance to the eclectic Sufi and syncretic trends in Indian Islam The few cosmetic changes have not changed the Jamaat into a reformist or modernist movement ' Also, 'as a militant expression of orthodox Sunni Islam, its ideology promotes sectarian consciousness, widens the Shia-Sunni rift and creates barriers between communities' Indeed, 'at the heart of the Jamaat's campaign is the long cherished ideal of creating a pan-Indian Islamic/Muslim identity' (*ibid* 209-10)

Cutting across differences, the issue of upholding Muslim personal law formed the basis for mobilising Muslims on a fairly large scale, even

as an organisation like Majlis-i-Mushawwarat had failed to form a united Muslim front in the country Yet, in the normal course of things,

> for most Muslims, far removed from and indifferent to the quibbling in the Jamiyat-al-Ulama, Jamaat-I-Islami or the Majlis-i-Mushawwarat, the critical issue was not the fate of the Shariat, which was in any case accepted by the state as sacrosanct, or the validity of the Islamic state idea, it was to establish, for their own survival, and progress, enduring relationships with fellow citizens and with established political parties (*ibid* 215)

Thus, the nature of Muslim politics in the political field was one major strand in the unfolding of events This prompts us to consider also the role of the state in the whole affair, for it has been pointed out that 'what started as an expression of Muslim feelings and misgivings acquired the shape of significant sentiments only as a result of the intervention of specific political processes and developments in the political arena' (Zoya Hasan 1989 47)

Bourdieu defines the state as the ensemble of fields that are the site of struggles in which what is at stake is the monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence, that is, the power to constitute and to impose as universal and universally applicable within a given 'nation', that is, within the boundaries of a given territory, a common set of coercive norms (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992 111-12) Since the state is an ensemble of fields in which different species of capital circulate (for example, economic, military, cultural, juridical, and, more generally, symbolic), the emergence of a specific capital, a properly statist capital, is the result of the process of the rise and consolidation of these fields and the concentration of their different species of capital This statist capital allows the state to wield a power over the different fields and defines the specific power of the state It follows, according to Bourdieu, that the construction of the state goes hand in hand with the constitution of the field of power understood as the space of play in which holders of various forms of capital struggle in particular for power over the state, that is, over the statist capital that grants power over the different species of capital and over their reproduction (*ibid*)

In the case of the government's response to the Supreme Court judgement in the Shah Bano case, statist capital was used to modify the balance of forces within the juridical field in a way that confirmed the supremacy of statist capital over other species of capital That this, in turn, was the result of the play of forces and struggles within the field of power, for control over statist capital, is borne out by the fact that those

who opposed the judgement appealed to the state to modify it, and the government that reversed it, was prompted to do so by considerations of retaining its power Even when faced with resistance, as it was by the heterodox response to the judgement, and active demonstrations of protest, the balance of forces in the field of power was tilted in favour of an outcome that was in keeping with a process that had been shaping Indian politics for sometime now, a process described as the communalisation of the state

To consider this process briefly it has been noted that, since the 1980s, a significant factor abetting communalism in India has been the role of the ruling party in supporting religious fundamentalist forces, especially Hindu fundamentalists Thus, writing in 1989, Amrita Chhachhi observes that

> In sharp contrast to the positions in the late 1960s and 70s, the ruling Congress Party has now shifted from its earlier public condemnation of communalisms and of Hindu organisations and support to the victims of minority communities (in particular the Muslims) to a more generalised condemnation of communalism and the foreign hand in public pronouncements along with a series of concessions to communal demands, a refusal to indict individuals identified as being responsible for the violence, and a stifling of secular opinion, both, within and outside the ruling party (1989 569)

She goes on to say that

> This shift in the stand of the ruling party on communalism was partly due to an electoral strategy to cash in on the 'Hindu vote', especially in north India When this strategy did not result in large scale support in the 1986 by-elections, there was a shift back to and a succumbing to Muslim fundamentalist demands by pushing through the Muslim Women's Bill The ruling party played one communalism off another in the electoral numbers game (*ibid*)

However, Chhachhi points out that it would be a mistake to see the consolidation of communalism today only as the backlash of a short-sighted electoral strategy Among the deeper factors at work is the increasing crisis of the ideological legitimacy of the Indian state and its need for a new hegemonising ideology For, while post-independent India did have in the early period an anti-colonial nationalism to bind together and give legitimacy to the newly created 'nation-state', now forty years later, given the results of development policies, the state can no longer claim legitimacy from past struggles The centralising tendency

of the state, moreover, requires some ideology of unity, and the emergence of fundamentalism amongst sections of civil society could provide a basis for such state ideology

In the attempt to explain this phenomenon further, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the state as an ensemble of fields, rather than as an autonomous apparatus is useful, as it allows us to see the continuity between the state and civil society (see Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992 111-15) But drawing, as he does, mainly upon the experience of West European societies, Bourdieu emphasises the homogenising thrust of the state To understand the playing up of differences by the state, as indeed, the creation of new differences by it, as in the case of a communalised state, requires a development of his concept in a different direction For this purpose, the work by Katherine Verdery (1994) on ethnicity, nationalism, and state-making is particularly suggestive Drawing on the anthropologist Brackette Williams' work, Verdery points out that a homogenising policy creates the 'nation', as consisting of all those the state should administer, because they all ostensibly 'have something in common' 'State subjects', she writes, 'are most frequently encouraged to have "in common" (besides their government) shared culture and/or "ethnic" origin' (*ibid* 45) Significantly, though, she adds that 'to institutionalise a notion of "commonality" however, is to render visible all those who fail to hold that something in common' This means that 'the relentless press toward homogeneity' that underlies the totalising process of making modern nation-states is 'simultaneously a press toward exclusion' The state is 'the frame for producing visibility through differences whose significance it creates' (*ibid*) Thus,

> By instituting homogeneity or commonality as normative, state building gives socio-political significance to the fact of difference – that is, it *creates* as significant pre-existing 'differences' that hitherto had not been organised as such It groups them as differences of ethnicity, gender, locality, class, sexuality and race, each of these defined as particular *kinds* of difference with respect to the state's homogenising project (*ibid* 46)

Adapting Bourdieu's language, she suggests that we may see state making

> as a process that raises 'difference' from the realm of notice, where disputes can occur between the orthodox and the heterodox, the normal and the strange – that is, between the values associated with what are now recognised as significantly different options but were not previously seen to be so (*ibid*)

Attention to this dimension of the role of the state marks a significant development of Bourdieu's notion of the state as an institution with a monopoly over symbolic violence Verdery goes on to note that states vary in the intensity of their homogenising efforts for numerous reasons, such as the degree and nature of the power exercised by political elites and the resistance they encounter From this it may be argued that the homogenising policy of the state in India has been subverted by socio-political processes into a policy that includes the homogenising of religious communities into different groups, and playing them off against each other, as a manoeuvre to manage the state's crisis of legitimacy The contest is now between the emerging orthodox bases of making differences, and other heterodox forces that may prove stronger That, in the process of such state making, identities are created, is a fact which needs to be taken into account to see the link between subjective day to day experiences and macro processes For conceptualising this, Bourdieu's analytical framework of a dialectic between habitus and fields is powerful With reference to the Shah Bano case, this means that the symbolic violence wielded by politicians subscribing to orthodox notions of Muslim identity, was compounded by that wielded by the state

However, as regards the crisis of legitimation of the state, Bourdieu does not have much to offer He refers to it just in passing, noting that 'what is problematic is the fact that the established order is not problematic, and that the question of the legitimacy of the state, and of the order it institutes, does not arise except in crisis situations' (1998 56) This, incidentally, is in striking contrast to the work of Jurgen Habermas (1975), who has been centrally concerned with the legitimation crisis of the state, although with reference to advanced capitalist societies This is so even as Bourdieu's involvement with the phenomenon 'neoliberalism' in his later work did lead him to engage with the changing role of the state in European societies

Conclusion

The analysis presented above is a tentative one, to explore the potential of Bourdieu's theory of the symbolic in relation to the Shah Bano case in a preliminary way What emerges from it is the heuristic value of several concepts, beginning with the concepts of doxa, orthodoxy and hetero-doxy They are found to be useful in mapping the terrain of the symbolic field in which the case is located, as well as in delineating the habitus of the actors involved In terms of Bourdieu's concept of history, the 'ontological complicity' between habitus and field, that characterises

historical action, leading to social reproduction, is to be found in the case of the events composing the case (Bourdieu 1981 306)

However, as fields are also sites of struggle; we find, not surprisingly, elements of both conservation and subversion, as well as relations of domination and subordination, involving processes of symbolic violence and misrecognition Thus, we have referred to the symbolic violence to which Muslim women are subject, ranging from that perpetrated by men in Shah Bano's family, to that wielded by religious clerics, affecting both men and women, but women particularly We have also referred to the violence of law, which brings into dispute the rights of women as equal citizens, and the violence of political groups and leaders that create the myth of the homogeneity of the Muslim community regardless of existential heterogeneity Above all is the symbolic violence monopolised by the state, which in the case of the communalisation of the state as in India, creates differences between religious groups, reinforcing the violence of clerics and politicians

However, we did find certain limitations of Bourdieu's theory of the symbolic in relation to analysing the case For one, the positing of a single orthodoxy, as Bourdieu seems to do in his early work, makes an understanding of competing orthodoxies problematic However, since in his later studies of the cultural field, Bourdieu does talk of competition for the status of orthodoxy, we seem to have a preliminary basis in his theory for analysing communal ideologies and practices This, though, would constitute only a starting point, with the specifics of the Indian situation lending their own dimensions to his concepts

Secondly, in so far as his analysis of the state focuses on the homogenising role of the state, the phenomenon of a communalised state would seem to be beyond his purview However, we have suggested that it is possible to develop his concept of the state in a different direction, drawing on the work of Verdery, so that the role of the state in creating differences is highlighted

Finally, there is an absence of a concern with the crisis of legitimation of the state in Bourdieu's work, which, it seems, is needed to fully appreciate the political dimension of a case such as the Shah Bano case in India It may be argued, however, that this is something Bourdieu would have taken into account, in his future work, given his concern with the global state of affairs in his later years Sadly, with his passing away in January 2002, this work remained incomplete

KP 2691

Notes

1 While I have drawn upon several works by Bourdieu in this paper, the seminal sources for some of his conceptions are as follows for his concepts of habitus and field, Bourdieu (1985), for his theory of the symbolic, Bourdieu (1979), and for his theory of practice, Bourdieu (1986, 1990)

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Women Research Scholars in IITs: Impact of Social Milieu and Organisational Environment

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Women in academic science and engineering form a very low proportion at the doctorate level and still lower at the faculty level in premier institutes The universal perception of rationality and gender-neutrality in academic science has precluded any discussion on organisational environment in institutes of learning in science This article examines the socio-cultural and structural factors that impact women in science It compares the social milieu of men and women research scholars, and their perceptions regarding the organisational environment The organisational milieu is found to be as important as the social milieu in influencing women Despite the class advantage for women, they are deficient in self-confidence and have low expectations from themselves, implying a waste of talent of women who could work aggressively for the pursuit of excellence in science

[Keywords academic science, universalism, interaction, gender, tokenism]

Women in science face barriers in their careers almost globally This represents a contradiction to Robert K Merton's stated norms of science According to Merton (1973), science and its institutions are governed by the norm of 'universalism', or the principle that scientific careers are open to all those who have talent, that ethnic, gender or other social factors shall not impede participation in science Similarly, institutions of higher education are viewed as rational, bureaucratic organisations that are gender-neutral However, various social and institutional factors are seen to impede women in science (Long and Fox 1995, Etzkowitz *et al*

2000, Fox 2000) It has also been shown that academic institutes do not always uphold merit and equality, and various formal and informal policies and practices of educational institutes reproduce social inequalities (see Sandler and Hall 1986, Sadker and Sadker 1994)

As elsewhere, in India too, women in science face problems However, the position of women in science in India is also influenced by the Indian socio-cultural norms and by the nature of scientific practice in India The Indian socio-cultural norms influence the social context of women and the informal milieu of the academic institutes The Indian social structure and ideology, referred to as 'patrifocality' by Carol C Mukhopadhyay and Susan Seymour (1994), and its emphasis on female chastity (Chanana 2001b) directly affects women's education Science is considered as a male enterprise Educational decisions are family decisions Although science and engineering degrees bring in greater prestige and job opportunities, most families are less inclined to invest family resources in academic achievements of daughters than sons It is assumed that after marriage benefits of their education would accrue to their husband and his family Many parents perceive a danger of sexual exploitation in sending girls to a predominantly male college Fear of travelling alone across towns, odd hours, long period of study, and danger of not finding a suitable match (of higher education and age) constitute barriers to women's education in science

According to the Report of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) (2004), the proportion of girls declines from primary to secondary, but increases from graduation (39 0%) to post-graduation (42 5%) in science and then declines again from post-graduation to PhD (37 2%) Thus, the pipeline hypothesis (that proportion of women in science steadily declines as they move upwards in the pipeline of education) does not apply to India The percentage of women enrolled in PhD in engineering is 16 5 per cent

However, in the prestigious institutes such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the enrolment percentage at all levels is much lower than the national percentages The Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) for admission into the prestigious Bachelor of Technology (BTech) programme of the IITs is overwhelmingly taken by men and there are very few girls taking this examination According to a report on JEE (Gupta *et al* 2004 7), among the registered candidates only 14 per cent are girls At IIT Kanpur, women doctoral students constitute about 12 3 per cent of science doctoral students and about 10 2 per cent of the engineering doctoral students (Registration Data of PhD Students of 2002-2003 – II Semester) A low percentage of women in PhD in science

and engineering at the IITs, compared to the national averages, shows reluctance of women regarding enrolment in IITs

Less number of women in PhD at the elite IITs does not imply that women are less meritorious than men An analysis of academic career of women engineers by P P Parikh and S P Sukhatme (1992) shows that 75 per cent of women engineers ranked in upper 10 per cent of their class at high school or junior college level and their performance at the engineering degree level was also commendable About 80 per cent of gold medallists in Indian universities are women, but they form only 7 7 per cent of the work force in science and technology (*Times News Network* 2002) The gender gap in science in India is a product of the social system (patrifocality) as well as the nature of science as it has been practised in the institutes This is also evidenced by the status of women faculty in science and engineering

Women as faculty in science and engineering in reputed institutes barely constitute 7 per cent of the total faculty in science and engineering (Gupta and Sharma 2002, INSA 2004) This decline in proportion fiom doctorate (11%) to faculty position (7%), despite teaching being an attractive proposition for girls, indicates that factors other than merit are at work There are some studies on women faculty members in institutes of science and engineering emphasising various aspects of work environment – such as patrifocality and Third World status of Indian science (Subrahmanyam 1998), and lack of informal interaction, contacts and networking (Gupta and Sharma 2002, 2003) – contributing to the lack of visibility of women scientists Studies on women in various science professions (see Gurnani and Sheth 1984, Chakravarthy 1986, Kumar 2001, Jaiswal 1993, Krishnaraj 1991) have emphasised the role of prejudices, lower status in organisational hierarchy, lack of infrastructural support and the dual burden for women scientists as responsible for their poor visibility in science There is a dearth of studies on women in doctoral science This study attempts to fill this gap

Objectives and Methodology

The main objectives of this study are to analyse the social milieu of male and female research scholars and to study the academic environment at the doctoral science level It also aims at studying the impact of the Indian social and academic environment on male and female research scholars

To meet the above objectives, two prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs),[1] out of a total of seven, were selected for the study The IITs are reputed for upholding rationality, merit and fair play The

study is not intended to reflect on the IITs, but to understand the position of women in science by studying the best institutes Since men students far exceed women students, all women and an equal number of men students pursuing doctoral studies formed the sample Questionnaires were administered to those men scholars who were available in their departments at the time of the survey or who could be contacted through Email Identical questionnaires were administered to boys and girls to compare their perceptions

In order to gather experiences of women doctoral students, semi-structured interviews with one-fourth women respondents were conducted Since the focus of the study is women, men research scholars were not interviewed This is also a limitation of the study However, given the absence of studies in this area, it was exploratory in nature and qualitative perceptions of men probably need a separate treatment

On an average, the interviews lasted for 20-30 minutes Some unobtrusive sources of information, such as rule books and official documents of the institutes were studied Pilot study included eight girls and seven boys at IIT Kanpur in May 2003 Data, through questionnaires and interviews, was collected during the period June 2003 to August 2004 Table 1 presents details of the total number of doctoral students in different departments at the two institutes and the actual number from whom questionnaires were obtained

Questionnaires were collected from 81 men and 78 women research scholars At IIT-1, questionnaires could be obtained from 34 women out of 42 Of the 8 who were left out, 1 refused to fill it up due to lack of time, 1 in Electrical Engineering and 1 in Physics had left in between, and the rest had left after submitting their thesis though they were still registered for the current semester At IIT-2, data could be collected from 44 women out of 55 Of the 11 who were left out, 7 were not available, 1 woman had left after getting married, 1 refused to fill it up due to a lack of time and the rest filled it up partially At both the institutes those students who had already spent more than two semesters at their institute were interviewed so that a more experienced view of the students could be obtained There were no women research scholars in Aeronautical Engineering and Nuclear Engineering and Technology at IIT-1, and in the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Training at IIT-2

The IITs are reputed for excellence in undergraduate science and engineering education and faculty research Envisaged as 'MIT-type' institutions in India, their administrative and academic autonomy are vested, respectively, in the Board and Senate of each Institute They produce a large majority of masters and doctoral graduates in the country However, those who are enrolled in the PhD programme at the IITs are not

Table 1 Distribution and Sample Size of Male and Female Research Scholars at IIT-1 and IIT-2

Department	Total number in the department				Sample size			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	IIT -1	IIT -2	IIT -1	IIT -2	IIT -1	IIT -2	IIT -1	IIT -2
Physics	37	13	3	4	5	11	2	3
Chemistry	86	22	12	13	11	10	12	12
Mathematics	32	22	8	11	6	8	5	8
Electrical Engineering	20	22	2	2	2	5	1	2
Civil Engineering^	32	106	1	7	2	3	1	5
Mechanical Engineering	35	24	1	0	-	1	1	-
Computer-Electronic Engineering	7	9	1	6	1	3	1	4
Bioengineering	2	11	2	10	2	4	2	8
Chemical Engineering	19	16	7	1	7	-	5	1
Other Science/Engineering	61*	23	5*	1**	-	-	4	1**
Total	331	268	42	55	36	45	34	44

Note ^ including Earthquake Engineering, Hydraulics and Earth Sciences Departments at IIT-2 At IIT-1, these branches are merged in the Civil Engineering Department, *Aeronautical Engineering, Materials and Metallurgical Engineering, Material Science Programme, Industrial and Management Engineering, Nuclear Energy and Technology, Statistics, D Degree, ** Metallurgy and Materials Engineering

not usually the graduates from IITs but from other universities/colleges in the country Most of the BTechs from IITs migrate abroad for PhD (Indiresan and Nigam 1993)

Social Milieu of Women Research Scholars

Social milieu includes family and the social context at large in which socialisation of an individual takes place This has a significant effect on motivations and attitudes Educational, occupational and income level of the family are closely 'interlocked in the social structure and influence one another' (Chanana 2001a 265) In this study, a comparison between the social backgrounds of men and women shows class variations The findings reveal a better background of girls that indicates selective access of women to education This access, however, is not free from contradictions

Socioeconomic Background

Women research scholars belong to a better socioeconomic background than men scholars While about 14 per cent men are Other Backward Castes (OBCs) in our sample, women OBCs are only 3 8 per cent The Scheduled Caste/Tribe (SC/ST) women are 2 6 per cent and such men are 3 8 per cent Rest are in the General category This indicates a higher degree of social mobility among the lower caste boys than among the lower caste girls A high percentage of boys (about 30%) were born in village, while only one female respondent was born in village The urban background of the girls is further seen in the distribution of respondents according to the place where they have spent most of their life (see Table 2)

Table 2 Distribution of Respondents by the Place where Men and Women Respondents Spent Most of their Life

Place	Females		Males	
	f	%	f	%
Metropolitan City	5	6 4	6	7 4
Capital City	11	14 1	9	11 1
Other Urban Areas	39	50 0	54	66 7
Village	1	1 3	9	11 1
Town with IIT-1	3	3 8	1	1 2
Town with IIT-2	19	24 4	2	2 5
Total	78	100	81	100

Note f = frequency

A majority of the students from both sexes have lived in the 'other urban areas' While the number of boys (11 1%) who have lived in the village is higher than the girls (1 3%), it is smaller than the number of boys born in villages (29 6%) A high percentage of girls (24 4%) have lived in the same town where IIT-2 is located Of these, 84 per cent are studying at IIT-2 and the rest are at IIT-1

An overwhelming percentage of boys have completed their high school and intermediate education in the other urban areas (80% and 75% respectively) In spite of the fact that 30 per cent boys were born in villages, a much lesser percentage spent their lives (11 1%) or did their schooling (up to intermediate) from the village (5%) This again shows an upward mobility among the families of the boys

Differences in school backgrounds are interlinked with the social background The medium of education is a powerful indicator of the socioeconomic status of a family English medium schools charge high

tuition fees and are therefore restricted to the high-income groups These schools have higher academic standards than the Hindi medium schools In our data, girls from English medium schools far surpass the number of boys in such schools While there are about 47 per cent girls at high school level and 59 per cent girls at the intermediate level in the English medium, boys at the respective levels in the English medium are only 25 per cent and 36 per cent

A comparatively better socioeconomic background of girls is further seen in terms of parents' education About 40 per cent of the female doctoral students have fathers with a post-graduate degree, while the corresponding figure for male research scholars is only 19 per cent As many as 33 per cent of the fathers of male students have not attended any degree college, while only 8 per cent of girl scholars have fathers who did not attend any degree college A comparison of the education level of mothers of male and female doctoral students shows a similar picture of a better social background of the female doctoral students Mothers of 11 per cent male research scholars are illiterate and 62 per cent have never gone beyond the school level The corresponding figure for female research scholars is only 1 per cent and 31 5 per cent

Fathers of about half of the male doctoral students are in lower level occupations such as clerical jobs, school teaching, workers and cultivators Fathers of only 16 per cent girls are in these occupations About 50 per cent of the women doctoral students' fathers and only 32 per cent of the men doctoral students' fathers are in administrative, managerial and other professions Almost half the men in our sample have fathers with the income of Rs 10,000 or less, while only 21 per cent of women are in the same category

Table 3 Father's Monthly Income

Monthly Income	Female Response		Male Response	
	f	%	f	%
Above Rs 20,000	18	27 3	8	10 9
Rs 20,000–16,000	15	22 7	11	15 1
Rs15,000–11,000	19	28 8	21	28 8
Rs 10,000 and less	14	21 2	33	45 2
Total	66	100	73	100

Note f = frequency

These findings confirm those of the other studies in India (see Jaiswal 1993, Subrahmanyam 1998, Kumar 2001) that women in science belong to a better socioeconomic stratum than men A better socio-

economic background of girls indicates selective access of girls to higher education Families with a higher income and educational background are more willing to send girls for higher education in science

A good socioeconomic background of girls ensures a positive family support for girls Thus, about 76 per cent women (only 54% men) said that parents encouraged questioning rather than blind obedience About 64 per cent girls had a relative in science against only 48 per cent boys Higher education also implies delayed marriage more than 75 per cent of the male and female respondents are unmarried A high percentage of women (43 6%) and men (51 8%) research scholars are in the age group 26-29 Only a few women (4 out of 34) of this age group are married This shows that, for women pursuing a higher education in science and engineering, age of marriage increases from the social norm of 22-25 years to 26-29 or, perhaps, more

Socio-Cultural Constraints

In spite of their better background, certain biases can be discerned in terms of girls' education in science Given the patriarchal nature of society, the stake in boys' education is much higher than those in girls' education About half (48 6%) of the male respondents and only 15 per cent female respondents reported family influence in decision regarding choice of subjects at the Xth standard level About one-third (30 3%) male respondents and only 7 per cent female respondents reported family influence in decision-making regarding the choice of science or engineering subjects after the XIIth standard level

Expectations from boys are in terms of professional career advancement, while girls are expected to use their education for being 'independent' About 40 per cent women scholars report their parents wanting them to be 'independent' and only about 22 per cent male scholars report similar expectations About 61 per cent male respondents report that their parents want them to be 'highly successful' in career This shows that parents of girls want their daughters to be economically independent by taking up career and employment However, they do not entertain expectations of a high level of achievement from their daughters Sons are expected to be 'highly successful' than just being independent However, there is an emerging section in society which is also ambitious about their daughters About 40 per cent girls report that their parents want them to be 'highly successful' This indicates a broadening of outlook and challenging of traditional role-expectations from daughters among certain sections of society

Girls who take up science are required to attend colleges that are predominantly male, and they might be in a different town as well However, they are more likely to be sent to the local colleges (that is, colleges within their hometown) rather than the better ones in a different town because as Carol C Mukhopadhyay says, 'the social dangers of engineering institutions can be minimised somewhat by attending a college in one's hometown and avoiding the "hostel" situation' (1994 115) A higher proportion of girls enrol in local rather than in all-India engineering and technical institutions like the IITs However, if a prestigious institute is local for the girls, a high number of girls may be found from the same city-town

Respondents were asked if they joined the institute for undergraduate and graduate studies because of the proximity of the institute to their house (Table 4) The respondents were asked to mark on a scale of 1 to 5 from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' A higher mean indicates a higher degree of agreement It is seen that the average is higher for girls than boys for both the statements, which confirms that girls tend to attend college nearer home This is usually due to family pressure For instance, a woman scholar remarked that she could not appear for JEE because her mother did not want her to go far from home Selecting a college near home is also sometimes due to a woman's own desire to be near home that reflects a lack of confidence and successful internalisation of social norms Furthermore, the p values for t-statistic is less than 05 (one-tailed test) for statement (b), indicating that differences between the means are statistically significant, which shows that at the graduate level choosing nearby college was more important in case of girls than boys Also, since average is higher for statement (a) than (b) for girls and boys, the concerns of a nearby college is more important at the undergraduate level than at the graduate level

Table 4 Selection of College Due to Proximity to Home

Statement	Average		p
	Men	Women	
(a) In B Sc-B Tech I chose the college nearest to my house	2 77	3 07	08
(b) In M Sc-M Tech I chose the college nearest to my house	2 09	2 61	00

Gender Stereotypes

Differences in background and upbringing shape opinions and attitudes to a large extent These differences in attitudes are evident in the

response to the sex-role stereotypes by men and women research scholars While 60 per cent men and women respondents agreed that society had a negative perception about women in science, they varied in their agreement on the statement that science is suitable for men Table 5 gives averages of response from men and women doctoral students Higher average shows a higher degree of agreement with the statement on a scale of 1 to 5

Table 5 Average Agreement of Respondents on Science being Suitable for Men

Statement	Average		p
	Men	Women	
(a) Science and engineering is a male enterprise	2 2	1 6	00
(b) Science and engineering require intellectual abilities more suited to men than women	2 4	1 6	00

It is seen that women respondents strongly disagree with the statements Also, while the men respondents do not agree with the statements, their disagreement is not strong The difference in the responses of men and women respondents is significant since the difference between the means is statistically significant All p values for t-statistic are less than 0 05 at 5 per cent level of significance (one-tailed test) While women researchers clearly reject stereotypes about a woman's ability to pursue science, men researchers do not reject these stereotypes with the same vehemence as women

The stereotype against women in science and traditional attitude among men in science is also reflected in the differences among women and men researchers regarding the efficacy of the male and female faculty members About one-third men research scholars believe that men are better teachers and researchers, while only about one-tenth of their women counterparts think so The negative opinion of the male colleagues regarding women in science has a damaging effect on the organisational environment, particularly in interaction, since girls have to interact with these male colleagues in the institute and the laboratory everyday Also, opinion of the peers can be important in self-valuation and self-esteem

Organisational Environment of Women Research Scholars

Both men and women scholars rejected that faculty members were partial in grading Also, there are no formal rules that discriminate against women However, practice of science involves informal interaction Western studies have shown that, in doctoral education, unofficial

learning based on establishment of informal ties runs parallel to the official degree programme (Etzkowitz *et al* 2000 73) Doctoral study is a period of apprenticeship wherein a graduate student learns to be a part of the scientific community through informal learning that requires supportive social environment, integration with the research group and access to informal sources of information (Delamont and Atkinson 2001, Etzkowitz *et al* 2000) Women are less integrated into their research group, are more distant in relationship with advisor than men and often work in isolation (Etzkowitz *et al* 2000, Fox 2000) Gender stereotypes influence the post-graduation socialisation process These disadvantages accumulate over a period and account for female marginalisation in science Interaction with the advisor is the key element in doctoral study In India, interaction with the advisor and others in the institute is further affected by social norms and by the manner of practice of science

Interaction with Advisors

The respondents in this study acknowledged that the advisor has a role beyond supervising thesis work advisor is important in 'boosting morale', in 'providing support during tension', and in 'career counselling' S/he is powerful since s/he is the sole authority to decide whether sufficient quantity and quality of work has been accomplished to merit the degree All PhD students at the two IITs have to devote 8 hours a week as Teaching Assistant (TA) Through her/his role as a TA, the scholar gets an opportunity to assist in instruction and grading for various undergraduate courses Apart from the TA duties, a research scholar may have to perform extra work for the advisor, such as preparing conference presentations of the advisor, writing reports and performing experiments that have no relation to the thesis Such work may provide a good learning experience and is important in building an informal interaction with the advisor However, women are usually given less of such extra tasks implying lack of mentorship in case of women scholars There is a belief in the intellectual superiority of men According to a woman respondent in Chemistry (IIT-1), 'Even if the non-academic work is given to girls, boys get appreciated more If girls do well in such tasks, guides often say, "You must have done this with the help of boys You girls can't do this"' Some women respondents reported faculty members 'preferring boys in the laboratory' since they can work at odd hours and are seen to be 'more intelligent' A woman respondent about to complete her doctorate in Chemistry (IIT-1) remarked, 'There is a lot of mental harassment for girls which is work-related For instance, girls might get scolded much more which puts them

into depression and brings down their research level' Boys too have unpleasant interactions with their advisors However, failings of girls are often equated with a lack of competence of the female gender as a whole Also, given a low level of self-esteem among girls, scolding has a far more serious effect on girls than it would have on boys

Informal interaction with the advisor is usually quite useful it helps in 'building rapport', in 'breaking ice', in 'talking more openly', and it 'makes interaction more comfortable' Yet, a majority of the women respondents (60%) interact with the advisor for thesis work in the faculty member's office only, while only one-third men do so (see Table 6) More men than women interact informally with the guide within and outside the department This is mainly due to social segregation norms that infiltrate the institutes According to Shipra[2] (Mathematics, IIT-1), 'Boys are more comfortable in interaction with the guide They can approach him anytime I have to think twice' Another respondent (Chitra, Mathematics, IIT-2) said, 'Not only male scholars interact more with the guide, guide also interacts more with them It helps in both ways' While male scholars get greater opportunity to interact with the guide and thus solve their work or extra-work related problems, guides also tend to give more responsibility to men that indicates influence of gender-stereotypes in science Thus, advisors are mentors of men students, playing a key role in their professional socialisation Women students appear to lack such mentorship, which may have a bearing on their future scientific success Advisors act as mentors because they help to enhance skills of young scholars and guide their intellectual progress They also help students to believe in themselves and guide their professional career (Kanter 1977, Levinson 1978) Lack of such mentors is a major disadvantage for women in science

Table 6 Distribution of Respondents according to their Level of Informal Interaction with the Advisor

Statement		Percentages	
		Men	Women
(a)	Interact with guide only for thesis work in his-her office	31 2	60 3
(b)	Informal talks with the guide in the department	`47 5	28 2
(c)	Interact with guide for thesis work at his-her residence also	5 0	5 1
(d)	Informal talks with guide outside the department	16 3	6 4
	Total	100	100
	N	80	78

Interaction of women scholars with other faculty members and students in the department may be affected by the departmental politics Competition among the faculty members of an institute is not

uncommon This competition may take the shape of a subtle conflict wherein a student may be affected As a woman respondent (Chemistry, IIT-1) said, 'My guide doesn't like if I talk to the students of other labs ' Another (IIT-2) commented, 'If two faculty members do not get along, students of those two are not expected to interact much either ' Also, a guide may not like his student to talk to his rival Such conflicts further isolate girls

Interaction with Peer Group

Interaction with peer group is essential in doctoral studies A student needs to clear doubts during course work, to learn from the seniors about the vagaries and uncertainties of experiments and the way to cope with them, and to obtain cooperation from peers for various research related tasks Such an interaction provides 'less formal enculturation' (Delamont and Atkinson 2001 104) and forms part of socialisation of doctoral students However, one of the most important problems faced by the women doctoral students in India is a diminutive in-group, that is, a tiny circle of friends, colleagues, seniors and juniors to depend on or ask for help Women doctoral students are few in every department at the IITs If they need to discuss or clear doubts, they have to seek help of men This implies fixing time with them and going to their hostel For men, it is much easier, since they are large in numbers and interact regularly and frequently amongst themselves They have greater accessibility to the help of the seniors and colleagues

The social norms of segregation and a lack of critical mass only partly accounts for a diminutive in-group for women Another factor is the relative reluctance of men to seek out women colleagues for help About 55 per cent men and 50 per cent women agreed or partly agreed that men found it difficult to ask women for help in assignments and programming Also, help may be required in non-academic matters related to rules and procedures of the institute Data indicate that while girls may be aware of the rules and procedures of the institute, they are less aware of the informal ways of getting things done Furthermore, interaction of men doctoral students is in a wider group than that of women While only one-fourth of the men scholars confine themselves to interacting with research scholars of the same laboratory or the same advisor, about 44 per cent women do so Majority (58%) of the male respondents interact with scholars of their department

This in-group shrinks further for women due to the manner in which science is practiced Effect of the competition among faculty members has already been mentioned Competition among students of the same

laboratory and hierarchy among junior and senior scholars also affect women adversely Scholars of the same guide or laboratory often form groupings based on seniority, gender, and favouritism by the guide, and common interests In laboratory of one advisor (IIT-1), women scholars reported intense competition among scholars to be in his good books This had led to scholars working in tiny groups so that a rival group may not lift ideas

Such competition leads to a lack of cooperation among the scholars of the same laboratory According to a respondent (Electronics, IIT-2), 'Seniors hesitate to help with the programming and other work, and may even misguide, because they are worried that the information might leak out and their work might be revealed So they are very secretive ' In IIT-2, there is a considerable hierarchy among the juniors and seniors Here seniors are called 'sir' or 'ma'm' by the juniors In this hierarchy, junior girls are at the receiving end Seniors get their thesis typed by the juniors and pass on the work given by their guide to the juniors This is true of the laboratories where juniors and seniors work together, and juniors are dependent on the help of the seniors For example, in Chemistry laboratories, where a junior may need immediate help regarding experiments or may need to know the reason for the failure of her/his experiment before approaching the guide However, this hierarchy among students is much less pronounced in IIT-1, indicating the effect of local institutional culture, which varies from one IIT to another In some laboratories of both the Institutes, help of male scholars might be required in lifting heavy equipment, which also creates groupings According to a respondent (Chemistry, IIT-2), 'Boys expect us to be good with them otherwise they will highlight our weaknesses in front of the guide '

It is a strange contradiction that while male scholars perceive the academic environment as being biased in favour of women, women research scholars perceive discrimination against themselves For instance, more men than women agree that professors treat girls differently in class, that professors have lower expectations from girls, and that women faculty members give special attention or are partial to girls A perception that girls make unfair use of sex to get grades is much stronger among the boys than girls This difference in perception is partly explained in the following statement of a respondent (Manjari, Chemistry, IIT-1) 'One thing common I have seen here is that men are not willing to accept that a woman research scholar can do well There is an ego problem This is really intimidating '

Numbers and Interaction

Women in male dominated organisations are essentially 'tokens' R M Kanter (1977) introduced the concept of 'tokenism' to describe the situation of those in the minority, regardless of whether the token is defined by gender, race or any other category Women in science and engineering educational institutes in India are few and the problem of numbers is compounded by the social attitudes There is an overall male preponderance in numbers in the two institutes Girls constitute 12 7 per cent of the doctoral students in science and engineering in IIT-1 and 20 5 per cent, in IIT-2 (see Table 1) The number of girls in engineering departments is even lower According to an earlier study (Gupta and Sharma 2003), biases such as 'ME (Mechanical Engineering) is not suited for girls' are very common and show up at the time of selection for both undergraduate/postgraduate courses and faculty positions Certain areas like mining are barred to women candidates The women candidates who qualify the JEE are not given mining because Section 46 (1), Mines Act (1952) of Government of India does not permit them to do their practical training Moreover, at the time of counselling, in many institutes, women candidates are advised not to opt for courses like Metallurgy and ME

The present study shows that while a low number is a decided disadvantage, a higher number does not necessarily improve interaction with the majority In both the institutes, girls in physics and engineering are miniscule, and they feel that there are few persons whom they could ask for help Presence of a large number of girls in a department helps girls to form their own groups However, this does not have much effect in terms of informal interaction between male and female research scholars For instance, according to Chitra (Mathematics, IIT-2), 'there is a gender-based grouping in our department Since there are many girls here, we don't need much of boys' help Boys feel that we are isolating them But boys too remain in isolation If we do approach them with a problem they are not very helpful ' A higher number of girls in a department does not necessarily lead to a larger girls' group because of separation into different laboratories, similar to H Etzkowitz's 'paradox of critical mass' (Etzkowitz 2000) As Nishi (Chemistry, IIT-2) said, 'even though there are a lot of girls in chemistry, they get divided into laboratories'

On the other hand, low numbers have a definite negative impact Neeta (Physics, IIT-2) said, 'I do not have much interaction with anyone in the department Boys have their own groups We have to maintain distance with them for the sake of decorum ' Negative effect of low numbers brings in a situation of heightened visibility (Kanter 1977)

Being few in number, girl students are more noticeable A respondent in Earth Sciences (Aparna, IIT-2) said, 'everyone knows me but I don't know them' Some other statements made by the respondents were, 'absence of the girls from the class gets easily noticed', 'everyone is curious about me', and 'everyone knows girls by name and face' A 'heightened visibility' due to the minority status is aggravated due to a stereotyped evaluation of girls in science Since science is seen as a male vocation, the performance of women is under a constant scrutiny Thus, as Varsha (Chemistry, IIT-1) said, 'everyone is curious about how girls will perform' Girls have to prove their ability in order to gain acceptability in the system About 56 4 per cent women scholars agreed that girls have to work harder than boys in order to prove themselves On the other hand, only about 26 per cent of the male scholars agreed with the statement

Self-Esteem

As noted above, majority of the women in science who reach the doctoral level have received encouragement from their parents and the immediate kin regarding their capabilities Yet, these positive evaluations of a daughter's capability are not free from biases related to women in science Furthermore, due to social stereotypes, and through informal interactions at the institute, the women pursuing doctoral research in science receive negative messages from their social and academic environment that places them secondary to men in the scientific field As a result, women are deficient in self-esteem and have low expectations from themselves

This low esteem is illustrated by the finding that many of the girl respondents believe that qualities for success in science are possessed more by men than women The respondents were first asked to rank the traits in the order of importance The trait that they thought was most important for success in science was to be marked 1 and the least important as 15 Table 7 shows the average ranks given by men and women respondents The overall rank according to the mean are given in brackets with rank one being the most important trait as it was marked '1' by most respondents For both men and women, first five traits required for success in science are 'passion for science', 'hard work', 'sharp intellect', 'analytical ability' and 'creativity' Pearson's rank correlation is as high as 0 98, which shows an agreement among men and women in the order of ranks There is a perfect positive correlation in the ranks 6 to 10

Table 7 Sex-wise Average of Ranks of Traits Required Succeeding in Science

Trait	Men		Women	
1 Passion for science	3 11	(2)	2 69	(1)
2 Hard work	2 28	(1)	2 96	(2)
3 Sharp intellect	4 80	(3)	4 26	(3)
4 Analytical ability	4 91	(5)	4 40	(4)
5 Competitive spirit	6 96	(6)	6 41	(6)
6 Creativity	4 44	(4)	5 49	(5)
7 Communication skills	8 26	(7)	8 26	(7)
8 Assertiveness	9 18	(9)	9 21	(9)
9 Renowned guide	9 08	(8)	8 64	(8)
10 Mentors-advisers	9 96	(12)	9 79	(11)
11 Cooperative spirit	9 18	(10)	9 60	(10)
12 Ability to make contacts	10 98	(13)	11 31	(12)
13 Social background	11 42	(15)	12 27	(15)
14 Interpersonal skills	10 89	(11)	11 37	(13)
15 Leadership qualities	11 13	(14)	12 21	(14)

Given the significance attached to the first five qualities, it is interesting to see who (male-female) is supposed to possess them more This is brought out in Table 8 on perceptions of the respondents regarding these traits The respondents were given three options for each trait (i) women possess this trait in particular, (ii) both may possess this trait, and (iii) men possess this trait in particular They were asked to mark one of the three options for each of the traits Percentages of the responses were calculated for each trait separately for men and women

Table 8 Distribution of Respondents According to the Perception Regarding Traits Possessed by Men and Women for Succeeding in Science

Trait	% Men Respondents		% Women Respondents	
	Men Possess	Women Possess	Men Possess	Women Possess
1 Passion for science	30 0	2 5	14 7	2 7
2 Hard work	15 0	17 5	5 1	44 8
3 Sharp intellect	40 0	2 5	24 6	5 2
4 Analytical ability	41 6	1 3	25 3	9 3
5 Competitive spirit	33 8	18 8	22 4	15 8
6 Creativity	24 3	14 1	5 3	46 7
7 Communication skills	7 5	26 3	11 8	21 1
8 Assertiveness	21 5	10 1	22 2	6 9
9 Independence	63 6	1 3	54 7	2 7
10 Ability to make contacts	27 8	27 8	44 7	6 6
11 Cooperative spirit	33 3	11 5	18 4	28 9
12 Interpersonal skills	11 4	15 2	10 7	13 3
13 Leadership qualities	52 5	0	37 3	4 0

Table 8 shows that women are perceived as possessing the qualities of 'hard work', 'communication skills', and 'interpersonal skills' by both men and women respondents Women feel they are more creative (Trait 6) and cooperative than men (Trait 11) Also, a larger percentage of women than men think that women can put in more 'hard work' than men However, the most striking is that a large number of both men and women think that qualities of 'passion for science', 'sharp intellect', 'analytical ability', and 'competitive spirit' are possessed by men Thus, out of five top qualities, four are perceived to be possessed by men more than women Also, the percentage of men that believe that men have these qualities is substantial, varying from 30 to 42 per cent About one-fourth women also feel that men are more intelligent, analytical and competitive Both male and female respondents feel that men possess 'assertiveness', 'independence', and 'leadership qualities' As for the 'leadership qualities', none of the men and only 4 per cent of women thought that women have this quality A major difference of opinion is in the 'ability to make contacts', whereas about 45 per cent women thought that men possess this quality, only 28 per cent men thought so This analysis brings out a high level of self-esteem among boys and a general perception of a lower calibre of women among both boys and girls Qualities like 'independence' and 'assertiveness' are reflections of a social system with emphasis on male as 'aggressive' and female as 'docile' Thus, it is not surprising that men are seen to possess them more The qualities of 'communication skills' and 'interpersonal skills' are interrelated and it conforms to the general perception that women 'excel in their relations with other people' (Valian 1999 154)

Impact of Expectations and Self-Esteem

Stereotypes tend to lower the expectations that parents have from girls in terms of performance in science and engineering The impact of lower expectations is tremendous As Virginia Valian says, 'the effects of expectation are more far ranging than what happens in a single conversation or interaction Others' expectations may shape the interests and goals of people's lives' (*ibid* 152) In this study, a low self-esteem and low expectations appear to translate into lower confidence about the future career prospects among women This is indicated by the fact that more numbers of men are confident about their future than women About 51 per cent men strongly feel that they are going to have a very successful career after their studies, while about 41 per cent of women feel so strongly (Table 9)

Table 9 Distribution of Respondents Reflecting Self-Confidence

Statement	% Strongly Agree	
	Women	Men
(a) I am confident of producing good results in my present research efforts	30 8	53 1
(b) I feel that I can be a successful scientist	33 3	55 6
(c) Low grades give me a feeling of low self-esteem	18 7	10 1
(d) I feel that I am going to have a very successful career after my studies	41 6	50 6

A lower self-confidence among women shows up in terms of lower expectations from themselves and a downsizing of their professional ambitions Women redeem their self-esteem by doing best what is expected of them and by comparing themselves with other women rather than men (*ibid*) It is for this reason, perhaps, that women in this study look for balancing home and professional life rather than success in the professional life (Table 10) Thus, it is a cycle of stereotypes, lower expectations and lower confidence reinforcing stereotypes

Table 10 Long-Term Goals

	Long-term Goals	Women (%)	Men (%)
1	Professional success	15 4	48 1
2	Monetary success	-	-
3	Social service	6 4	18 5
4	Balancing career with home	70 5	30 9
5	Domestic happiness	5 1	2 5
6	Any other	2 6	-
	Total	100	100
	N	78	80

The findings show that more than 75 per cent of men and women would prefer academic to non-academic career However, when asked about their long-term goals, while 48 5 per cent men opted for 'professional success', 70 5 per cent women opted for 'balancing career with home' (see Table 10)

Women also perceive clearly that they will have to handle a major share of the domestic chores To the question posed to the respondents, 'Would you expect your spouse to share domestic duties equally?', as many as 51 2 per cent women said that they would expect their spouse to share in some duties only, while only 23 1 per cent men said so Thus,

the socially prescribed roles for men and women are reflected in the perceptions of men and women pursuing the highest degree in science

Challenging Tradition

A few men professors are extremely co-operative in supervising the women research students A woman respondent in IIT-1 (Mathematics) said, 'I can easily discuss my problems with my guide, which is important because I am not able to discuss with boy colleagues who have their own groups ' Those parents who harbour ambitions for their daughters also challenge the social order in terms of delaying marriage age of their daughters and envisioning a 'public' sphere for them

The greatest challenge comes from the women doctoral students They reject social stereotypes regarding women much more than their male counterparts The very presence of women in science at the highest educational level, and in majority cases higher than their own parents, represents social and educational mobility Some of the women doctoral students are extremely dedicated and have a mission in life other than having a successful domestic life According to S Gurnani and M Sheth (1984), Indian women scientists are undergoing transitional period Their choice of science profession is yet restricted to its use-value as an instrument for making living more convenient Few women consider science career in order to express their personhood or to achieve attitudinal changes in outlook

Even though statistics suggest that compared to 48 per cent men, only about 15 per cent women desired professional success as a long-term goal, the numbers do not do justice to the spirit of these 15 per cent women Some of these women described 'a successful woman' as a 'professional woman', or 'one who has fame in her field', or 'one who can pursue her dreams' A woman respondent remarked, 'I want to achieve a lot and to prove myself', another had the single-minded goal 'to excel' in life A few cases were also found where girls were pursuing higher studies in opposition to the wishes of their parents They were from diverse fields, including, chemistry, computer science and engineering and biological engineering

Conclusion

This study shows that the assumptions of 'universalism' in science and rationality in educational organisations need to be examined to understand the cause of women's low participation in science and engineering at the higher level Interlinkage between organisation of

academic science and the socio-cultural systems such as family and society reproduce social relations at the institutes Social milieu is important since science and educational institutions are embedded in the social context While the practice of academic science is mediated by the need for groups and advisor-advisee interaction, these groups and interactions are, in turn, governed by the social norms and social backgrounds of the people involved

The message received from the social and educational environment is often mixed and cannot be labelled as negative for girls at all times Yet, it is not unequivocally in favour of girls, as in the case of boys Girls who take up doctoral programme in science have usually been encouraged by the family but not without contradictions that reflect gender role-expectations in society Boys who reach doctoral programme in science are more conservative than girls in our sample In the organisational environment, lack of informal interaction with the advisor, other faculty members and colleagues leads to isolation of women research scholars As a result, the latter have to depend excessively on their own capability and merit leading to considerable hard work among women In response to the social and academic environment, women seem to lose their self-esteem This along with a lack of mentorship of women students at the doctoral level may affect prospects of these students to pursue scientific research as a career

Notes

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1 The identities of these two IITs are withheld to protect the identity of the respondents They are referred to as IIT-1 and IIT-2
2 The names of the respondents have been changed to protect their identity

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Matrilateral Cross-Cousin Marriage among the Chothe of Manipur

Cheithou Charles Yuhlung

This article highlights the prevailing status of prescriptive marriage alliance system among the Chothe, often wrongly called Purum, which took centre stage in social anthropology in the early 1960s It also deals with many confusions and doubts prevailing in the literature on matrilateral cross-cousin marriage It shows that the Chothe kinship and marriage system is, to use Rodney Needham's words, 'ideal, stable and adaptive' even today, despite considerable changes that have occurred since the time of Tarak Chandra Das, who worked on the Chothe during the 1930s

[Keywords Chothe, matrilateral cross-cousin marriage, prescriptive marriage, descent groups, kinship terminology]

Introduction

The Chothe is an indigenous tribe of Manipur in the north-eastern region of India According to the Census of India 2001, it has a total population of 2,675, spread over eighteen villages, with a literacy rate of 71 per cent It is concentrated in two districts, namely, Bishnupur and Chandel Based on village agglomeration, it is divided into three groups, namely, eastern, central and western (Basu 1985 38)

The Chothe follow patrilineal descent and an exogamous prescriptive matrimonial alliance system, in which matrilateral cross-cousin (MCC) marriage, or marriage with mother's brother's daughter (MBD) or with a girl of mother's clan, is the most preferred Marriage with father's sister's daughter (FZD) is prohibited because of the close patrilateral relationship The Chothe society has a triadic structure, with three categories of clan based on marital relationship There is no direct exchange of wives between lineages Wives are exchanged indirectly

between clans The indirect exchange operates in rotation that completes the cycle after the third or fourth generation

The issue of the Chothe MCC marriage took the central stage in social anthropology with Claude Lévi-Strauss' work, *Les Structures élémentaires de la Parenté* (1949) George C Homans and David M Schneider (1955) criticised it Rodney Needham (1960b) answered the criticism and proposed his own theory of 'matrilineal connubium' by providing empirical evidence from Tarak Chandra Das' materials with respect to Chothe prescriptive marriage alliance rules (Das 1945) Frank B Livingstone (1959) criticised Needham's characterisation of this system as 'ideal, stable and adaptive' (Needham 1958 97-98) Later, Needham's *Structure and Sentiment* (1962) was examined critically by Floyd G Lounsbury (1962), which was followed by Charles Ackerman's strong rejection of his assertions by statistical method (Ackerman 1964) Thereafter, various scholars like William H Geoghegan and Kay Paul (1964), George L Cowgill (1964) and William Wilder (1964) argued against Ackerman and supported Needham Needham then clarified various hypothetical statements in his 'Explanatory Notes on Prescriptive Alliance and the Purum' (1964) Thus, the Chothe society received a great deal of scholarly attention and became a part of the anthropological map of the world

Although various early British and Indian ethnographers and others – like M McCulloch (1859), R Brown (1874), T C Hudson (1911), John Shakespeare (1912), J K Bose (1933), Ramesh Chandra Roy (1936), Das (1945) and Gupta (1985b) – wrote about the Chothe, it was Needham who highlighted the Chothe social structure, especially their MCC marriage system Thereafter, numerous scholars have written about the Chothe kinship structure and their MCC marriage alliance system in different ways, depending upon their understanding of available sources

Although the Chothe and Purum tribes are different entities, many scholars are confused and have considered them as one and the same tribe Das wrote that the Chawte near Bishenpore and the Purum are 'two branches of the same tribe' The Purum are said to have migrated to Bishenpore, and one part of the tribe stayed there and 'came to be known as Chauthe'[1] (1935 2-4) Moreover, Das described that they 'do not break the endogamous law', which obviously indicates that they are traditionally of common origin (1945 109, see also Needham 1958 79, 1960a 237) The error of projecting the Chothe of central cluster as Purum by the census officials was clarified on 10 March 1983 in the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika,* a Kolkata daily, as follows 'In fact, that is the correct name of the tribe Purum is the character of the geography of this area, which is added as a prefix to the name of their villages ' Gupta also

acknowledged that 'the people called themselves as Chote' with reference to the society studied by Das (1945), namely, *The Purums* (Gupta 1985a 53) I would, therefore, refer to Das' Purum as Chothe (Chote) in my MCC marriage analysis No doubt, there are the genuine Purum, with a population of about 503 (Census of India 2001) in the northeast of Imphal in Senapati district of Manipur (near Sagolmang-Pukhao), who are biologically, socially and culturally different from the Chothe (Maipak 1985 26)

Studying these books and articles on the Chothe MCC marriage system, I was fascinated by the debate surrounding it, and decided to investigate it myself Therefore, I conducted my own census in two different formats in all the eighteen Chothe villages and also interviewed many village chiefs, elders and youth leaders during August and September 2004 as part of my doctoral research work [2]

Descent Groups

I would begin with the nomenclature of clans and sub-clans There seems to be some confusion about them among the Chothe, since they could not explain precisely their eponyms The Chothe claimed to have five clans in the past, but they now claim to have seven clans and several sub-clans The names of clans according to various ethnographers are shown in Table 1 Das (1945 118) mentioned five clans and fourteen sub-clans in four villages, excluding two villages of the extreme eastern and western groups However, Gupta (1985a 74) states that there were altogether twenty-seven clans and sub-clans in nine villages Presently, there are seven clans and seventeen sub-clans, that is, a total of twenty-four The names of the sub-clans are shown in Table 2

The confusion in the eponyms of clans in different villages was believed to be due to prolonged separation after the Kuki (Kamhao) aggression some four hundred years ago, when the Chothe were displaced and scattered (Maipak 1985 26) and the different geographical locations inhabited by them now (Gupta 1985a 42) The people also claim that some clans and sub-clans had become extinct in some villages during inter-tribal wars, and migration caused by natural and unnatural deaths For example, sub-clans such as Thao Teyu and Khiyang Ingte became extinct (Das 1945 119) It is now found that some sub-clans – namely, Pilling, Rangshai, Rungkung and Parpa – are acknowledged in some villages as substitutes in order to continue with the prescriptive marriage rules

Table 1 reveals that the confusion lies with reference to Yuhlung and Parpa clans One explanation given by the informants regarding the fusion of Yuhlung as a sub-clan of Khiyang is that, about 100 years ago,

Table 1 Chothe Clans According to Various Ethnographers

Shakespeare (1912)	Bose (1933)	Roy (1936)	Das (1945)	Maipak (1985)
Kiang	Hiyang	Hiyang	Kheyang	Khiyang/Hiyang
Marem	Marim	Marim	Marrim	Marim
Makhan	Mekhong	Makhang	Makan	Makan
Thao	Thao	Thao	Thao	Thao
Irung	Jurung	Jurung	Parpa	Yuhlung
	Piring	Piring		Parpa
				Rungkung/Rangshai

Note See also Needham (1960a 238)

Table 2 Names of Clans and Sub-Clans

Clan	Sub-Clans
Yuhlung	Tangkim
Khiyang	Aihung, Impi, [Ingte], Rungkung , (Hulpu)
Marrim	Rimphumchong, Rimkung, Rim-ke-lek, Pilling, (Musom)
Thao	Thao-kung, Thao-run,
Makan	Kankung, Makan-te, (Laisik)
Parpa	No sub-clans
Rangshai	[Teyu]

Note Names within '(parentheses)' refer to missing sub-clans and those within '[brackets]' refer to extinct clans

among the Khiyang, one old married couple of Tampak-hu (Purum Tampak) village adopted an orphan Yuhlung boy from Chumbang village The boy's parents had died of some natural cause at an early age and he was left alone Besides, since the old married couple did not have a child of their own and were also related to the boy's mother, they proposed to adopt the boy as their own, which was agreed to by the child's paternal relatives When the boy reached marriageable age, the Khiyang couple married him off to another girl of Khiyang prescriptive clan The confusion began when it was asserted that Yuhlung was a sub-clan of Khiyang, due to which the village people prohibited marriage between Yuhlung and Khiyang The villagers of Chumbang, Khong-khang and Lamlanghupi permitted marriages between Yuhlung and Khiyang without restriction, but this was challenged by the people of Tampak-hu and other villages who restricted such marriages (Gupta 1985a 75) Thereafter, the secret was exposed, and all the Chothe villages, which objected earlier, have now acknowledged that Yuhlung and Khiyang are different clans, and henceforth marriage between them

is permitted and practised Thus, the man's sons and grandchildren have all changed their clan name from Khiyang to Yuhlung now

With respect to Parpa, it is believed that it is also a sub-clan of Makan, but the members of Parpa disagree No consensus has been reached with regard to the clan status of Parpa is it a sub-clan of Makan or an intercepted clan like Pirring in Lamlanghupi? Pirring is now accepted as a sub-clan of Marim, that name was conferred on a Kabui Naga man married to a Chothe girl, and the village council established his clan as a dominant clan after performing certain rituals Hiyang is not an intercepted clan (*ibid* 74) Parpa is probably believed to be a sub-clan of Makan or an intercepted clan because it has no sub-clans, while others have at least one sub-clan each Whatever may be the confusion among scholars, it has been accepted and recognised as a clan by the Chothe society

The significant fact about the Chothe is that they have an understanding that marriage should be a one-way traffic and there should not be any direct exchange of wives between the lineages or sub-clans Such exchange is considered taboo and is prohibited

The triadic Chothe kinship structure is divided into three different groups of clans based on marital relationships (i) wife-giving, (ii) wife-taking, and (iii) unrelated or distant relatives or neutral groups Das as well as Needham had clearly described them as (i) a boy's or rather his father's sib, (ii) his mother's group of sibs, or rather the group from which his wife is recruited, and (iii) his sister's husband's group of sibs, that is, the group of sibs in which his sisters are married – this is sometimes his mother's mother's or his mother's mother's mother's sib (Das 1945 123, 125, Needham 1958 80, 81) However, sometimes the descent lines are viewed as categorised into two groups of *shapa* (*pipa*) and *sheinu/sarrnu* (*ni-ngon*), that is, male and female descent groups, due to which there appears to be a dyadic or moiety society, according to some scholars, which actually it is not (see Chart 1) [3]

Matrilateral Cross-Cousin Marriage

The following analysis is offered basically to give a picture of the prevailing Chothe prescriptive or MCC marriage system, about which numerous scholars have argued, and have expressed doubt about the structure expounded by Needham in 1958 Livingstone disagreed with Needham's term 'ideal', and with the assertion, 'This beautifully simple social system is stable and adaptive it can maintain itself, without contradiction to its unilateral rules of operation, irrespective of demographic changes or of fission of the segments which it unites' (Needham 1958 97-

Chart 1 The Chothe Prescriptive Marriage Alliance Rules

A boy can take or accept girls from the prescriptive clans and their sub-clans

Yuhlung	→ Thao, Marim, Parpa, Khiyang (including all its sub-clans)
Khiyang	→ Makan, Thao, Rangshai (plus all its sub-clans)
Marim	→ Khiyang, Thao, Rangshai (plus all its sub-clans)
Thao	→ Makan, Parpa, Rangshai (plus all its sub-clans)
Makan	→ Yuhlung, Khiyang, Marim, Parpa (plus all its sub-clans)
Parpa	→ Marim, Khiyang, Yuhlung (plus all its sub-clans)
Rangshai	→ Makan, Parpa, Yuhlung (plus all its sub-clans)

Source Maipak (2002 2), Das (1945 131-38)

98, see Livingstone 1959 1084) Livingstone argued that 'social system of this size, which observed the rules of matrilateral connubium, must undergo continual breakdown and realignment of the units which are connected by matrilateral connubium and hence could be called "unstable"' (1959 1087) Livingstone's hypothesis that Chothe MCC marriage system, or matrilateral connubium, 'must undergo continual breakdown', is not true Compared to some seventy years ago and even earlier, there is really not much difference in the prescriptive marriage graph, although there is a sharp decline in the preferential marriage rates, that is, marriage with the actual MBD

The data collected in September 2004 (see Table 3) show that out of a total of 591 married couples in eighteen villages, 446 (75 46%) are women belonging to the same tribe married under the prescriptive norms, and 145 (24 53%) are women belonging to different neighbouring tribes Also, out of 591 marriages, only thirty-seven (6 26%) are with the actual MBD, and 103 (17 42%) are with girls from the mother's clan Therefore, the total number of preferential marriages to MBD and girls from mother's clan is only 140 (23 69%) Thus, there are 306 (51 94%) marriages from prescriptive clans or sub-clans other than MBD or with a girl from mother's clan Out of 446 marriages, only three break the prescriptive marriage alliance rule (that is, there are incidents of direct exchange) in Tampakhu and Chumbang Since these incidents are negligible, I have not taken them into account here The increase in marriages with girls from other (neighbouring) tribes, signifying breakdown of the preferential marriage system, is believed to be due to various factors, such as closer and frequent contacts with neighbouring villages, free inter-tribal mixing, students' annual meetings and conferences, education, and the impact of Christianity and modernisation These

Table 3 Chothe Marriage Alliance System

Village	No of House-holds	Popu-lation	No of Clans and Initials of Clans	No of Married Couples	No of Marriages with MBD	No of Marriages with Mother's Clan	No of Marriages within Same Tribe	No of Marriages with Other Tribes
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Ayouhu (Purum Khullen)	38	164	(7) K, M, Mk, Y, Th, Pr, (Rs)	35	7	8	28	7
Bethel Happy land	04	13	(4) K, M, Th, Pr	04	Nil	Nil	4	Nil
Chandolpokpi	19	91	(4) K, Mk, Y, Th	22	2	4	16	6
Chothe Khunou	14	67	(5) K, M, Mk, Y, Pr	15	3	8	12	3
Chumbang (Purum)	72	336	(6) K, M, Mk, Y, Th, Pr	79	2	10	61	18
Khongkhang	49	296	(6) K, M, Mk, Y, Th, Pr	62	1	7	56	6
Laminghu	35	204	(5) M, Mk, Pr, Th, Y	43	3	10	38	5
Lamlanghupi [4]	53	291	(7) K, M, Mk, Y, Th, (P), (R)	50/58	Nil	Nil	24	34
Lamlanglon	13	42	(3) M, Th, Y	13	NIL	Nil	2	11
Leirungtabi	05	27	(4) K, M, Mk, (Rs)	05	Nil	Nil	2	3
Lunghu	06	39	(4) M, Mk, Y, Th	09	Nil	4	7	2
Lungleh	10	50	(3) M, Mk, Pr	10	Nil	Nil	5	5
New-Wangparal	25	138	(4) M, Mk, Y, Pr	23	5	2	17	6

(Table 3 continued)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Old-Wangparal	21	111	(4) K, M, MK, Th	24	5	12	21	3
Phantu (Chandrapoto)	54	260	(6) K, M, Mk, Y, Th, Pr	61	7	13	49	12
Salemthar	10	42	(3) M, Mk, Pr	10	Nil	Nil	6	4
Tampakhu (Purum)	72	332	(7) K, M, Mk, Y, Th, (P), Pr	83	1	22	69	14
Ziontlang	31	186	(5) M, Mk, Y, Th, (Rs)	35	1	3	29	6
Grand Total	**531**	**2689**		**591**	**37**	**103**	**446**	**145**

Abbreviations of clan and sub-clan names K–Khiyang/Hiyang, M–Marim, Mk–Makan, Y–Yuhlung, Th–Thao, Pr–Parpa, R–Runkung, P–Pilling, Rs–Rangshai

Note The census conducted by the author in September 2004 shows 14 persons more than the total population recorded by Census 2001

Table 4 The Reverse Trend in Chothe Marriage System

Year	Population	No of Marriages	No of Villages	Marriages with MBD	Marriages with Mother's Clan	Marriages under Prescription	Marriages with Outsiders
1936	303	85	3 (6-3)	63	11	74	11
1985	1464	169	9	-	-	128	41
2004	2689	591	18	37	103	446	145

factors make more girls available for marriage from outside the community Most of the boys now feel that MBD is too close to marry, they, therefore, try to avoid her, and prefer to marry girls from outside the community All this has reversed the graph as compared to some seventy years ago, when the preferential MBD marriages were as high as 88 per cent For example, out of a total of eighty-five marriages in 1936 in three villages, namely, Khullen, Tampak and Chumbang, sixty-three (74 12%) were with MBD, and eleven (12 94%) were with girls of mother's clan (excluding three villages of Changninglok, Khongkhang and Lamlanghupi), and only eleven (12 94%) were with girls from outside the community (Das 1945 241, Needham 1958 81) [5] The number of preferential marriages with MBD and girl of mother's clans has declined to as low as 23 69 per cent now, despite increase in the size of population However, the graph of the actual prescriptive marriage norms has not changed much, there is a high rate of 75 46 per cent of such marriages, while the rest of 24 53 per cent marriages were with women of different tribes, indicating a change from endogamy to exogamy

Thus, the above data reveal that the Chothe still strongly adhere to the prescriptive marriage alliance norms (MCC), that the 'matrilateral connubium or marriage in cycle' still prevails, despite a sharp decline in the preferential marriage (MBD) alliance norm Hence, we can assert that the Chothe prescriptive marriage norm is still quite 'ideal', 'stable' and 'adaptive' even today

Ackerman (1964) seems to be confused about the Chothe kinship structure Wilder rightly states that 'Ackerman's argument is unconvincing because it ignores the greater part of Needham's analysis' (1964 1370) Ackerman tried to disprove Needham's 'matrilateral connubium theory' or the practice of 'prescriptive marriage system' by his statistical method He argued that 'The [Chothe] marriage norm is not prescriptive Wife-takers can be wife-givers Direct exchange of women is not avoided There is no matrilateral prescription, no connubium' (Ackerman 1964 58) Ackerman's argument is flawed Geoghehen and Paul (1964), Cowgill (1964) and Wilder (1964) criticised Ackerman and supported Needham As I have clearly described above, the Chothe practise the prescriptive marriage alliance system, where MBD is the first and most preferred choice, a girl from mother's clan is the second option, and the third option is a girl from one of other prescribed clans Therefore, the most significant characteristic of Chothe marriage system is marriage in a circle, operating in one-way traffic, in which direct exchange of wife is strongly against the norm, and strictly prohibited Shakespeare has neatly described how the Chothe, like other Old Kuki tribes, namely, Chiru,

Aimol, Anal, and Lamkang, practised a prescriptive marriage system (1912 154) Roy (1936 142-43) too stressed on it Gogoi (1989 15, 51) emphasises precisely that the Chothe practised a prescriptive marriage norm Several scholars have used the Chothe system as a model to apply to different societies practising similar types of prescriptive marriage in cycle (see Ruhemann 1948 184-85, Leach 1951 35,) Robin Fox (1967 208-39) has described the system as asymmetrical alliance Some good examples of marriage-in-cycle, which sometimes is a long cycle, are given by Das (see 1945 124 - Table III, 133-38 - Table XIII-XI) and Needham (see 1958 84, 86, 88, Tables 6 and 8) In these examples, girls flow in one direction only, as shown in Chart 2

Chart 2 Flow of Girls in Marriage Cycle

(a) A→B→C→D→E→F→A→B [or] K→Y→M→Pr→Th→Mk→R→Y
(b) Makan→Thao-Yuhlung-Makan-Thao-Khiyang-Makan-Thao-Marrim-Makan
(c) Yuhlung→Makan-Thao-Khiyang-Parpa-Makan-Thao-Marrim-Parpa-Makan-Thao
(d) M1→Mk2- K- M3- Pr- Th1- Y- M2- Mk1

In operating such a cyclical system there is no hard and fast rule, or a mandate, that the cycle has to be completed by any means Sometimes the rotation may be very short, such that the cycle is completed in the third or fourth generation, while a long rotation may take many generations to complete the cycle As indicated by Das' data (1945), there are about eight irregular marriages, which break the marriage norm and in which direct exchange of wives between the lineages takes place Although some of these direct exchanges fall within the same clan or sub-clan, they may not be directly between two families of actual wife-giver and wife-taker For example, if one Yuhlung boy marries a Khiyang girl, say, in his mother's clan or in other prescribed clan or sub-clan, then a Khiyang boy from that family or lineage cannot marry a girl from that particular Yuhlung family or lineage But a Khiyang boy can marry a girl from other Yuhlung lineages – if he wishes to marry – when he feels that the relationship is already distant, separated by four to six generations If not, he marries a girl from other prescribed clans or sub-clans

Thus, the Chothe prescriptive marriage rule operates in the form of cycle (a matrilateral connubium), as brides are not directly exchanged Once they feel that the alliance relationship is far and distant, they try to rebuild it However, in the present context, most of the Chothe,

especially educated boys and girls, prefer to marry in unrelated clans, or even outside the community, to expand the horizon of marital ties with other ethnic communities, but unlike the Toba Batak, who marry for business advantages (Lounsbury 1962 1307) The main reasons for the increase in inter-marriages with the neighbouring communities are due to less inter-tribal wars and hostility, education, impact of Christianity, frequent socio-economic contacts at a market place, and numerous cultural exchange programmes like students' conferences and sports meets, etc , in addition to the breakdown and decline of the traditional value system Nevertheless, any person who breaks the traditional prescriptive marriage rule is severely punished with a huge fine, and even expulsion from the village, by the village council

In connection with the above argument, Ernst Muller states, 'It is doubtful whether this system is regarded as one of preference, prescription or, in the sense of Lounsbury (1962), as one of affinal alliance Lévi-Strauss, who objected to the term "preferential marriage", called this latter system "structure *élémentaire*"' (Muller 1964 1376) As pointed above, the Chothe follow a patrilineal descent system, which prohibits a man's marriage with his father's sister's daughter (FZD) Therefore, they prescribe a marriage rule, where mother's brother's daughter (MBD) is most preferred for various reasons Thus, priority was given to the preferential form of marriage, which was widely accepted by the society and commonly practised, considering it the most suitable and stable form of marriage It is not obligatory that every male member of a family should marry his MBD, but at least one man is expected to marry one of his MBDs to carry on their alliance, so that they could continue their affinal alliance as well as sentimental relationship Another significant point to be noted about the Chothe prescriptive rule is that it is a norm fixed especially for the lineage group or the sub-clan There is always a tendency to avoid girls even among one's clan, contrary to Ackerman's statistics and hypothesis, although he is right in asserting that it was more of preferential type in one-way (1964 64)

The origin and development of the Chothe prescriptive or MCC marriage norm is not known, but the Chothe believe it to be due to the patrilineal descent system They have their own explanation of why they prefer to marry MBD rather a girl from other prescribed clans and sub-clans According to them, in olden days, the gap in man-land ratio was great and they lived a nomadic life, where only a few groups of kinsmen would usually establish a new hamlet or village in a huge tract of land scattered in and around their own group but far from other sections of the community for various reasons like economy, frequent wars, feuds and famine They also said that they mistrusted most of the neighbouring

communities, as if they were an enemy This probably narrowed down the scope in choosing partners outside their own group Being a patrilineal descent group, they believed that MBD is the rightful girl to marry, since girls flow in one direction only and no direct exchange of wives was involved, as indicated in Chart 2

According to the Chothe, the preferential MBD marriage system develops due to several reasons (i) Due to the mother's love and emotional attachment for her son and her parental kinsmen, she wishes to continue the alliance relationship and, therefore, persuades her son to marry one of her brother's daughters (ii) The MBDs are kind, faithful, obedient, dutiful, thoughtful and understanding, especially towards the husband's parents, because of the close bond and mutual love and respect they maintain through their father's sister marriage (iii) The MBD usually takes much better care of her parents-in-law, compared to other prescriptive girls, when they grow old and, hence, they are more stable in their married life too (iv) Frequent wars and mistrust with the neighbouring tribes rendered them a narrow scope in choosing partners outside their own community and left them no choice but to marry among their own group, where MBD is preferred most because of the above reasons Such a marriage type, where the MBD is married to her father's sister's son is often called *mani-sum-tun-leh-hong-nu* (aunt's hairdresser returned girl)

Marriage Procedures

Traditionally, the Chothe have different types of marriage procedures If the boy's family is poor and unable to pay the bride price, he has to stay and work for three years in his desired future wife's father's house After completion of this work, he undergoes certain ritual formalities on a certain day, whereby the bride's and groom's fathers and other elders proclaim them as husband and wife From that day onward, the bride comes to live in her husband's home If the boy's family is well-to-do and can pay the bride price, he does not have to work for three years in the mother's brother's home

Nowadays, however, the system has changed and such ideas are not practised anymore The bride price commonly fixed and given for any marriage is three traditional shawls, a very good spear (without any marks), one good big knife (tip curved downward), two small spades, Rs 500 (one-rupee coins only), one bottle of *Zu* (wine), and a pot of *Sawai-zu* (rice beer) (Maipak 2002 4) If a girl elopes with and marries a boy of a different community, the boy has to give either a pig or an ox as a fine called *Hu-tang-lam* (fine for marrying beyond one's village) Among

Christians, *Zu* and *Sawai-zu* are substituted by tea, and the amount of bride price differs from one village to another The three traditional shawls of the bride price are meant for the bride's father, mother and maternal uncle If the bride's father is expired, it goes to the eldest brother, who acts on behalf of his late father However, if the groom is well-to-do, he may even give a traditional shawl each to all the bride's brothers, paternal grandfather and grandmother, and even to his wife's father's sisters (if any) Polyandry is not practised Polygyny, though practised, is not encouraged Divorce is theoretically allowed, but not resorted to much in practice Widows and widowers can remarry if they desire

Kinship Terminology

The Chothe kinship terminology is varied and complicated A Chothe man or woman may be addressed, referred, identified, and introduced differently by others depending on the basis of his/her descent and marital relationships (see Tables 5 and 6)

Confusion arises with the terms *maksa* and *arang Maksa* is derived from the term *amak*, which has the latent meaning of 'alliance' or 'compatriot', and is commonly used by people to address and introduce only those members of a particular family or clan who are 'daughter seekers or takers' [6] The actual wife-takers are often referred as *maksa* and *tusa*, but not for the male members of the wife-taking family *Tusa* stands for those individuals (grandsons) who take granddaughters from that lineage or clan and usually belong to junior groups It is basically a specific reference term used only on certain occasions and during functions in wife's family These wife-takers or alliance partners are indispensable, and have great responsibility, as they act like supervisors or assistants-in-charge for every department, on special occasions in their wife's family, such as marriage proposal, wedding feast, festivities, family rituals, and other family functions In such a situation, greater responsibility is assigned to the senior-most daughter's husband However, he is often called by name by his wife's parents and elders, but people are always referred to as ' *amak-pa*' It means 'alliance partners' in all the preceding and succeeding generations, that is, son-in-laws or daughter's husbands of the family Consequently, the daughter of the family is referred as *sheinu/sharrnu*

The *amak* or *maksa,* a wife-taker is addressed as *arrang* (FZH) by a man's wife's brother's children and lineage group only In fact, he is actually *apu* through certain descent relationship, but it is a term or tekno-

Table 5 Chothe Kinship Terminology

Term	Kinship	Term	Kinship
Apu -	FFF, FF, FFB's, MFF, MFB's, MB	*Apa -*	F, FeB's,
Api -	MMM, MM, MMZ's, FMM, FM, FMB's	*Anu/Ama -*	M, MeZ's
Aiya/Ata -	eB's	*U-nu/Aiya -*	eZ's
Ka-nao-pa -	yB's, FB'sS,	*Ka-nao-nu -*	yZ's, FB'sD
Ateer-pa/Ateer -	FeB's (same clan but of different lineage groups)	*Ateer-nu/Ateer -*	FeZ's,
Atun -	FyB's	*Anu-te/Ama -*	yFW's, yMZ's
Ka-tu-pa/Ka tu-nu -	both paternal and maternal grandsons – daughters	*Ka-te -*	Great grandsons – daughters of fourth generations
Upa/E-by - E-sen -	eZH's - WyB's	*A-uu -*	eBW's, (elder sister-in-laws)
Arirang -	FZH, WF,	*Ami -*	FZ, MB'sW
Maksa/Tusa -	DH's, ZH's, FZH's, GDH's	*Majui-pumu -*	Married women (women folk)
Pipa (Shapa) -	Eldest male head of the family/ lineage/clan, male descents	*Ningon (Sheinu/Sarr-nu) -*	D or actual younger sister
Ka-pa-shal -	My-Husband	*Ka-numei -*	My-wife

Note In references to these terms many prefixes are used for example, 'A' stands for possessive first person, *Ka-pa* means *my-father, Na* means *your* (singular form), *Na-ne/Na-ngei* means *yours* (plural form)

Table 6 Kinship Terminology (Teknonymy) according to Muller (1964 1375, Table 2)

	Patrilateral					Matrilateral				
	Cross		Parallel (Brother)			Parallel (Sister)		Cross		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	(Ego)	(Ego)	Male	Female	Male	Female
Older	A-pu	A-uu	Ata	U-nu/ Aiya	Ata	A-uu	A-pu	A-uu	A-pu	A-uu/Aiya
Younger	Tu-pa	Tu-nu	Nau-pa	Shemu/ Sarr-nu	Nau-pa	Tu	Tu-pa	Tu-nu	Tu-pa	Tu-nu

nymy invented to distinguish the relationship between two families of the alliance groups from the others Hence, to a certain extent, Needham (1958 92) has rightly assumed that the correlate of *maksa* is *apu* (which we have rendered as 'mother's brother') But it does not correlate directly with all the *apu*s in the strict sense of the term, for there are many other categories of relationships addressed as *apu* Rather, the direct correlate of *maksa* is *arrang* (father's sister's husband), that is, all the *arrang*s are *maksa*s and all the *maksa*s are *arrang*s Besides, these days, due to the influence of the Manipuri terminology, sister's husband (ZH), who is called as *upa*, is often addressed and introduced as *eby* (brother-in-law) by Ego or wife's (younger) brothers, who is *amak* or *maksa* of his family And, the sister's husband (ZH) addresses and introduces his wife's (younger) brother as *esen* (WB) These terms – *apu, arrang, maksa* and *upa (eby)* – refer to one and the same person, they are used by the wife-giving lineage only and sometimes by the clan members too, whose relationship is acquired through marriage That is, a person may be called as *apu* (by descent or seniority), but once he has a marital relationship with another family he is addressed by the above terms, according to the relationship and situation In short, *apu, arrang* and *upa (eby)* are personal relationship terms and *maksa* is a social reference term However, in the context of village affairs, he is treated as an individual person and he occupies his own status and position

These terms have nothing to do with the village social organisation and its affairs There is a clear demarcation between kinship terms and village council terms The terms mentioned above, except *maksa*, are all used in calling or addressing persons Therefore, in the lineage and clan context these *maksa* and *tusa* are indispensable persons and play a vital role in their wife's family feast, social functions and activities Hence, the teknonymy of *arrang* is a normal personal address term, while *maksa* is a specific reference term meant only for use on specific social occasions of one's wife's family

Since marriage among the Chothe functions in a cyclical manner, where one clan accepts a girl from another clan or sub-clan and gives its girls to yet another clan or sub-clan, no particular clan or sub-clan is superior or inferior in the Chothe society However, a special privilege or status is given to a man's mother's eldest brother, especially in terms of marriage issues, but it is the *pipa*, eldest brother of the family or head of the lineage or clan, who usually takes most of the major decisions falling within the jurisdiction of family, lineage or clan An individual or family having more economic resources, no doubt, has higher status, but it is always the village chief, his council members and the village elders occupying higher positions who are respected more in the society

Conclusion

The Chothe practice a prescriptive marriage alliance system (MCC), where MBD is the most preferred choice, but the trend has reversed in recent times Yet, the prescriptive norm still strongly adheres to the exogamous marriage alliance system within an endogamous unit This contradicts Livingstone's argument that 'social system of this size must undergo continual breakdown' (1959 1087), but confirms Needham's assertion that the Chothe prescriptive marriage system is 'ideal, stable and adaptive' (1958 97-98)

Notes

I am grateful to the anonymous referee for her/his invaluable guidance and suggestions in revising this article

1 Chawte or Chauthe or Chote or Chothe refers to the same tribe, and Bishenpore or Bishenpur is an old name of Bishnupur district of Manipur

2 Most of the data were gathered from village elders and organisation leaders Y Maipak and H Thambaljou of Lamlamghupi, Pr Babu Sing of Tampakhu, Y Yaima of Phantu, Th Amutomba of Ayouhu, Kh Shithang of Chumbang, and many others I thank them all My special thanks go to my friend Y Chousana for his enthusiastic assistance in data collection

3 *Pipa/shapa* is the male head of the family or lineage or clan The term *shapa* is commonly used by the eastern and central Chothe groups After the expiry of the father, the eldest brother of the family takes his father's position However, *pipa/shapa* is generally understood to mean all the male members of the family based on descent group *Sheinu/sarnu* means younger sister, but it also means spear It appears that the bride is exchanged with a spear from the groom, since a good spear (*shei/sarr*) is a must in the wedding ceremony, apart from other essential items Moreover, spear symbolically connotes war and defence The descent is termed as *sheinu/sarrnu* or *ningon*

4 In Table 3, the total number of married couples (591) includes both widows and widowers and also those domiciled in Chothe, that is, outsiders who become citizens of Chothe For instance, in the case of Lamlanghupi village, while there are 50 married couples of Chothe origin by birth, including both widowers and widows, there are 8 married persons who became the citizens of Chothe by marriage to Chothe girls and thus domiciled in the village

5 The percentages of marriage alliances data in 1936 and 2004 may not be exactly compatible because Das (1945) excluded three Chothe villages in his analysis

6 *Amak* is often used in singular, and *maksa*, both in singular and plural (that is in general)

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Strengthening and Sustaining Vitality of Urban Areas: The Case of North-West India

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In the states of north-west India – Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh – and the Union Territory of Chandigarh, the urban areas are growing with serious deficiencies in infrastructure, housing, civic services, environment and governance This article highlights the challenges that the urban areas of north-west India are facing and to see their short-term as well as long-term implications An attempt has also been made to suggest alternative strategies and innovations to meet the urban challenges

[Keywords urbanisation, infrastructure, environment, governance, vitality, sustainability]

Introduction

Globally the 'cities and towns are marvellous and vital instruments of exchange, vital for the development of economic systems and social organisations Cities are also the very places where political activity occurs Cities do, however, face tremendous challenges' (Freire 2001 xvii-xviii) Richard Stren (1996) has highlighted that, by their very nature, urban dilemmas are almost always multisectoral India is no exception to this general urban scene Despite the fact that urban areas are engines of economic growth and productivity, they are growing with serious deficiencies in infrastructure, services, environment and governance, the major constituents of the vitality of urban areas The physical, economic, social, political and environmental conditions of the urban areas of the country have degenerated Their improvement is a major challenge for

strengthening and sustaining the vitality of the urban areas as well as of the nation

According to Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen (1995), India's record in reducing social and economic inequalities since independence has been very disappointing Local democracy is a highly neglected institutional base of political participation in India The states of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and the Union Territory (UT) of Chandigarh are no exception to this general social, economic, political and urban scene in the country These states have failed to promote equitable urbanisation, housing and infrastructure development, which are a must for eco-friendly and vital growth of urban areas The crucial needs of the growing urban population of these states/UT are safe drinking water, sanitation, treatment of solid and liquid wastes, employment, housing, health and other civic/municipal services

Rapid growth of the urban population is putting tremendous pressure on urban infrastructure, services and environment The growth of slums, with or without the minimum basic services, is a serious challenge before the urban policy makers The social, economic and physical deprivation in the slums is widening the gap between the rich and the poor The lack of empowerment of local urban institutions is evident from non-devolution of funds, functions and functionaries, as mandated by the Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992 This is affecting the quality of urban governance In the wake of poor fiscal and functional de-centralisation, the city governments are unable to take up the necessary infrastructure projects, important for the vitality and sustainability of the urban areas The growing inequalities in terms of access to basic urban infrastructure, municipal and civic services and participation in decision-making at the local level could create discontent among the deprived sections and affect the law and order situation These factors and concerns constitute crucial challenges for the 'sustainability of vitality' of the urban areas

Rapid Urbanisation and Urban Growth

Every year, the urban population of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh grows by more than three lakhs During the current decade (2001-2011), this region is likely to add several Class I and metropolitan towns Punjab, with 33 95 per cent urban population in 157 towns, is the most urbanised state of the region and the fifth major urbanised state of India Haryana is the second urbanised state in the north-west region, with 29 per cent urban population in 106 towns Although Himachal Pradesh is the least urbanised, with 9 79 per cent

population in 57 towns, the implications of urbanisation there seem to be more complex due to the ecological importance of the state Chandigarh is highly urbanised, with 89 78 per cent urban population

The spatial pattern of urbanisation in the north-west region shows that the urban centres are growing along the major transport corridors and a linear/ribbon pattern of development is taking shape in the region In Punjab and Haryana, most of the towns are situated on the Grand Trunk Road The major towns in Himachal Pradesh are also situated on the national highways A number of towns/urban agglomerations have come up in the last few decades and the distance between towns has decreased due to the growth of new towns and the expansion of urban area limits The population is concentrating in Class I and Class II towns Uncontrolled migration and haphazard growth of slums are creating physical, demographic and environmental imbalances in the region and generating demand for the upgradation of urban infrastructure/services and civic amenities 'Still greater inequality may be expected in the level of basic services across the urban centres of different sizes, unless a concerted initiative is taken to reverse the trend' (Planning Commission 2002 100) These towns and cities are becoming over-crowded with higher population densities and several larger towns are acquiring a metropolitan character Ludhiana (1991) and Amritsar (2001) became the first and second million-plus metropolitan towns in the region Chandigarh is also likely to become a metropolitan town by the end of this year Several towns of Haryana are growing at an unprecedented rate and are likely to acquire metropolitan status in the near future

Rapid urbanisation is putting tremendous pressure on urban infrastructure/services in most of the towns and cities of the north-west region which are already in bad shape 'As India's cities continue to swell, the challenge of improving the urban infrastructure will be magnified' (*ibid* 99) The urban areas may become unliveable if the negative effects of urbanisation are not mitigated

Strategy to Meet Challenges of Rapid Urbanisation/Urban Growth

There is need to formulate state level urbanisation strategies and urban development policies for each one of the three states and UT of Chandigarh Since they are in close proximity, with inter-locked borders, these strategies/policies may emphasise promotion of their inter-connectivity and interdependence as well as their local self-government institutions This will facilitate integrated regional development to optimise the use of resources, minimise wasteful expenditure and ensure sustainable urban development The urban policy makers of Punjab,

Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh could explore possible areas of co-operation

Since a higher proportion of the GDP is produced in the urban areas, critical gaps in demand and supply of urban infrastructure and municipal services may be mitigated, as higher growth of the economy is contingent upon a strong base of urban infrastructure and quality services North-western states and UT may access central grants and non-budgetary resources under recently launched Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) for metropolitan and capital towns to augment the coverage and quality of urban infrastructure and basic civic services

The small and medium towns may be developed as potential viable regional growth centres with improved physical, social and economic infrastructure to counter the flow of migrants to the larger urban areas Better connectivity between large, medium and small towns and also the peripheral villages, through an efficient transport system, will help decongest the larger urban areas With cheap land, affordable housing and adequate basic amenities and services in the smaller towns and peripheral villages, people may find it convenient to commute every day To promote this, efforts may be made to provide urban-amenities in the rural areas

The poor migrant workforce contributes significantly to urban productivity There is a need to provide them proper living space, adequate and subsidised services, and a healthy environment For a harmonious growth, the strategies may emphasise rural-urban linkages, interdependence, area-specific approach to improve the social and economic conditions of backward areas, convergence of urban development, housing, poverty alleviation and slum development programmes and inter-sectoral as well as environmental dimensions of urbanisation Local solutions, with wider replicable potential, may be identified and implemented Strengthening the urban local bodies (ULBs) by transferring funds, functions and functionaries from the higher levels of government will help cope with the challenges of the growing urban population For institutional development and functional strengthening of urban governance, strategies may emphasise capacity building of urban managers, including elected and appointed representatives

Deficiencies in Urban Infrastructure, Municipal Services and Environment

There are serious deficiencies in urban infrastructure, municipal services and environment in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh

which must be mitigated to make their cities liveable There is decline in most of the components of urban governance and infrastructure Migrants are putting immense pressure on urban infrastructure and services, particularly so in larger and medium towns In Punjab, 'the major concern is the critical gap in demand and supply of basic civic services in growing urban areas' (Gupta and Teotia 2002 289) According to the Report of the First Punjab Finance Commission (1995), water supply is a big casualty Sewerage is inadequate, and even where sewerage exists, there is no arrangement for sewage disposal and treatment There are many pockets where even rudimentary surface drainage does not exist Solid waste collection, transportation and disposal leave much to be desired The condition of roads and streets is highly unsatisfactory, with about 40 per cent of these needing extensive repairs There are municipal areas without *pucca* roads and proper street lighting Large segments of the population live in slums and lack access to basic civic services

The state of urban infrastructure, municipal services and quality of urban environment is no better in Haryana, which has a common boundary with the national capital of Delhi The coverage of urban population with water supply, sewerage and solid waste management is poor in most of the towns in Haryana A skeleton sewerage system is operative in 40 towns Not even a single town had a sewage treatment plant in 1997 According to the Report of the First Haryana Finance Commission (1997), the municipal bodies are already under severe strain and have not been able to maintain a satisfactory level of infrastructure and civic services, and have been depending on the state government even for meeting the operational costs and the maintenance of their essential services Most of the municipalities are not even geared to perform the core civic functions at a satisfactory level

The urban infrastructure scenario in Himachal Pradesh is grim Deficiencies in water supply, sewerage, solid waste management, municipal roads, parking lots, streets and street lights are becoming acute with growing urbanisation 'Most towns lack sewerage systems and solid waste management is also inadequate These twin factors expose water to severe pollution hazards' (*State of Environment Report- Himachal Pradesh* 2000 107) The situation becomes acute in peak tourist months in summer, as well as in winter The cost of providing urban infrastructure services is higher in the urban centres of Himachal Pradesh because of the difficult mountainous terrain, inadequate supply of low-cost raw material and labour At the same time, pricing and cost recovery of the urban infrastructure is negligible The per capita availability of water in a large number of towns is well below the desired norms The

sewerage system in the urban areas of Himachal Pradesh is grossly inadequate Sewage treatment facilities exist only in seven towns (Teotia 2004b 342-44) The inadequacy of urban infrastructure is affecting the quality of life in the urban areas

The level and quality of urban infrastructure in Chandigarh is comparatively better, but a lot needs to be done The 'City Beautiful', which was created to give a concrete shape to Jawaharlal Nehru's dream and vision, seems to have lost its glory, due to the fast growing urban population and degeneration in several spheres of life The young city has crossed the population of more than nine lakhs, which is beyond the city's absorbing, supporting and sustaining capacity The city has been facing a decline since the early years of its construction, due to migration and haphazard growth of slums The migrants are putting immense pressure on the city's infrastructure The failure of rehabilitation/ resettlement schemes for the slums has worsened the city's environmental infrastructure The CRRID (Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development) *Report on Baseline Socioeconomic Survey of Unauthorised and Rehabilitated Colonies of Chandigarh* (1999) has highlighted concerns about the quality of life as well as the demographic and socioeconomic profiles of the slum dwellers The number of unauthorised settlements has been increasing at an alarming rate This is affecting the 'chessboard-type infrastructure' and the 'beautiful landscape' of the city Today, the city is a metropolis in the making New demands are likely to be generated with structural and physical expansion of the city

Growing need for investment The State Development Reports of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh, prepared by CRRID for the Planning Commission, have assessed that it is necessary to invest Rs 6,000 crores and Rs 607 73 crores for financing urban infrastructure in Punjab and Himachal Pradesh respectively during the Tenth Five-Year Plan (see Gupta and Teotia 2002, Teotia 2004b) The need for investment to finance urban infrastructure in Haryana and Chandigarh is also huge, as indicated by the state finance commissions In Haryana, the Public Health Department had assessed the need to invest Rs 1,037 24 crores on water, sewerage, drainage and solid waste management within thirty years The projected expenditure for ten years ending 2004 was Rs 449 99 crores If other municipal services are also included, the requirement will go up considerably Similar is the fate of requirement of funds for financing urban infrastructure projects in Chandigarh, particularly the augmentation and construction of water and sewerage networks, solid waste treatment plants, sewage treatment plants, municipal roads, streets and street lights, parking lots, ground water recharging

facilities and urban forestry, etc The existing fiscal base of most of the municipalities in the north-west region is poor, due to a variety of political, managerial, administrative and fiscal reasons Hence, they are unable to take up the necessary projects for augmentation of the urban infrastructure and municipal services Budgetary transfers from higher levels of government have been inadequate and are unlikely to increase

Strategy for Augmenting/Financing Urban Infrastructure and Municipal Services

'A strategy for developing capabilities within the urban local bodies to cope with the infrastructural deficiencies must be adopted, with genuine decentralisation of financial and administrative powers and restructuring of the entities on the basis of sound management practices' (Planning Commission 2002 100) The urban local bodies in the north-west region may raise their own resources and access the capital market for financing urban infrastructure and municipal services This calls for reforms in fiscal and financial management practices The state governments may implement the recommendations of the first and second state finance commissions to strengthen the fiscal domain of the ULBs The time frame recommended by the Report of the Supreme Court Committee on Solid Waste Management in Class I Cities in India (1999) may be adhered to The provisions made in the Municipal Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000, formulated by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for the management, transportation, disposal/treatment of municipal solid waste may be implemented

Alternative funding mechanism 'The changing urban scenario in the post 74th Amendment era and also the post-economic-reforms scenario demand a change in the existing financing mechanism' (Teotia 2004b 361) There is need for diversification of revenue sources of the ULBs and for mobilising non-budgetary resources for urban infrastructure Commercial orientation, institutional restructuring and fiscal reforms are required to attract funds from the capital market The Punjab Infrastructure Development Board, the Himachal Pradesh Infrastructure Development Board and other similar institutions could play a vital role in raising funds from non-budgetary sources

Additional local resource mobilisation To meet the growing requirements for funds for urban infrastructure and operation and maintenance (O&M) needs of municipal services, the ULBs will have to maximise local resource mobilisation from tax and non-tax sources It is possible if the ULBs are given adequate powers to fix the rates of taxes/user charges subject to the maximum laid down in the municipal

acts/laws of the state The power to grant exemption from the taxes may be given to the ULBs (*ibid* 361-62)

Reforming property tax and refurbishing other sources of tax revenues Reforms in Property tax are the need of the hour The ULBs in Punjab and Himachal Pradesh have been following the annual rental value (ARV) system of property tax, which has outlived its utility Chandigarh has been a heaven for municipal tax payers as property tax, which is a premier tax levied by ULBs all over world, was not levied in the city till 2005 Now, the Municipal Corporation of Chandigarh has introduced a nominal property tax on commercial/institutional properties Haryana initiated an improved system of property tax based on unit area, but it has not been implemented properly The Punjab and Himachal Pradesh governments could follow the *Guidelines for Property Tax Reforms (2002)* prepared by the Ministry of Urban Development (MOUD), Government of India, which has suggested that a good property-tax structure should have a low rate, minimum discretions, transparency, ensure equity and facilitate self-assessment

Innovative practices in valuation, assessment and collection of property tax as given below have been found suitable in Ludhiana and several other municipalities (see Gupta and Teotia 2001 and 2002)

- mapping of properties and developing a geographical information system,
- computerisation of property tax records for effective billing and collection,
- reducing wasteful expenditure through privatisation of billing and collection procedures,
- a scheme of penalties and incentives for tax payers, and
- single-window system, decentralisation of administration and periodical review of tax collection

The ULBs in the north-west region have a good scope for mobilising additional resources from shared taxes such as stamp duty, excise duty, electricity duty and show tax, water tax, conservancy/sanitation tax, profession tax and advertisement tax

Rationalisation of user charges User charges, if recovered rationally, could be used to finance the growing needs of the urban infrastructure/ municipal services According to the Report of the Eleventh Finance Commission (2000), the rate structure of user charges should be revised regularly to keep pace with inflation and to recover as far as possible, the full O&M cost of providing these services There should be no space for populist measures A periodic revision of user charges is necessary for the extension of these municipal services to uncovered areas Punjab,

Haryana and Himachal Pradesh may adopt slab rates for differential consumption keeping in view the O&M cost of municipal services as well as the interests of the weaker sections Chandigarh has already implemented growth-oriented slab rates and has improved recovery of O&M costs, coverage and quality of water supply and sewerage This model can be adopted by other north-western states with minor modifications to suit local conditions

Service charges on central/state government properties The Eleventh Finance Commission (2000) has recommended that all government properties, whether they belong to the central or the state governments, should be subject to the levy of user charges and should be regulated by suitable legislation The Governments of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and the UT of Chandigarh may consider this recommendation and direct the ULBs to levy service charges on central government properties

Using land as a resource and property and asset management The importance of land as a resource has not been considered seriously by the ULBs They may identify all scattered municipal lands including encroached lands and prepare an inventory of their locations and value It will be an asset with the municipalities, which can be used for raising resources from the capital market Similarly, computerised management of municipal properties and assets can help ULBs to preserve, maintain and compute the orderly growth of municipal assets and use them for resource generation (Teotia 2004b 365)

Incentivising urban reforms initiated by the governments The Government of India has introduced several funds and programmes to promote urban reforms which may be accessed by the states to promote urban infrastructure development through public-private partnerships Governments of Himachal Pradesh and the UT of Chandigarh have already accessed incentive grants under Urban Reform Incentive Fund (URIF) for rationalising user charges and other reforms in municipal management Punjab and Haryana may also promote urban reforms to access funds for infrastructure/services under URIF

Accessing central funds under the JNNURM North-western states/UT may raise central funds under JNNURM for financing the urban infrastructure and services in the rapidly urbanising towns, namely, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Shimla and Chandigarh identified under the scheme The preparation of city development plans is necessary to assess the need of investments, identify funding sources and reform initiatives required for the purpose

Accessing capital market There is a consensus on the mobilisation of resources from the capital market and international financial

institutions The municipal corporations of Ahmedabad, Ludhiana, Bangalore, Nasik, Nagpur, Madurai, Hyderabad and Indore have raised money through municipal bonds for selected urban infrastructure projects The ULBs may go for credit rating, prepare commercially viable or bankable projects and finance them through municipal bonds Clusters of smaller municipalities could float municipal bonds by pooling their resources and ensuring repayments through the escrow[1] mechanism The central government has announced tax exemption on bonds issued by municipal/local governments The ULBs can issue tax-free bonds to raise funds for urban infrastructure Loan financing through banks or specialised financial intermediaries is emerging as a viable option for raising resources for urban infrastructure and services (see Gupta and Teotia 2002, Bagchi and Kundu 2003, Vaidya and Vaidya 2004, Teotia 2004a and 2004b)

Poor Quality of Urban Governance

'Urban governance in India is at the crossroads' (Mathur 1999 43), and so is it in the north-western states How city governments and local communities meet the concurrent challenges of rapid urbanisation, development of environmental infrastructure/services, preservation of the planned character of cities, and most importantly, the transformation/ transition of urban governance after the 74th Amendment, will largely determine the future course of development Although municipal governance in the region is democratic in character, based on adult franchise, the system of participation is weak and provides little articulation of interests of different population groups Despite the regularity of elections, reservations and representations, real empowerment of urban governance remain a distant dream, as the process of functional and fiscal decentralisation to these institutions is tardy and the states are unwilling to share power with the third tier of government Since local self-government is a state subject, the fate of devolutions suggested through the 74th Amendment is to be decided by the states and the efforts of the central government to bring about an improvement in the quality of urban governance do not seem to improve the situation With their poor institutional and organisational mechanism, the ULBs find it difficult to take decisions necessary for the development of infrastructure and services The Times Research Foundation (1997) has observed that as regards the functional domain of the municipalities, besides a verbatim incorporation in the amended laws of the provisions of Article 243 which deals with the powers, authority and responsibilities of

municipalities, there has been no evidence of any change governing their functional assignments having regard to the financial implications thereof

One of the major factors responsible for poor quality of urban governance in north-west India is the continuation of old state municipal acts which still govern the ULBs Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh have not made serious efforts to amend their municipal laws in conformity with the constitutional amendment act and the recently circulated Model Municipal Law (see Gupta and Teotia 2005, Teotia 2005) Institutional, legal and political constraints have been affecting the quality of urban governance in the region The ULBs have been unable to respond to the needs and priorities of the people The wards, district and metropolitan planning committees have not been constituted at ward, district and city levels The failure of the city governments to maintain transparency, accountability and contestability is visible from their poor performance in providing and maintaining the required level and quality of urban infrastructure, municipal services and environmental protection 'The fiscal domain of the ULBs in Punjab is poor due to inadequate fiscal decentralisation' (Teotia 2004a 42) Out of Rs 180 65 crores, the share of the ULBs in five state taxes recommended by the First Punjab Finance Commission, only Rs 78 04 crores was transferred to the ULBs from 1996-97 to 2000-01 Similarly, in Haryana, out of Rs 301 83 crores recommended by the First Haryana Finance Commission, only Rs 65 36 crores was transferred to the ULBs

The outdated, time and money consuming urban management practices such as manual billing and collection of taxes, user charges, poor management-information-system database, no or little use of information technology/computers and software in municipal management, and lack of regular survey of properties/assets have been affecting the quality of urban governance in most of the urban areas There is no system of preparing annual urban environmental status reports and subsidy reports by the municipalities

Strategy for Promoting and Strengthening Good Urban Governance

Good urban governance is the key to meeting urban challenges

> Urban governance needs to be strengthened by vigorously pursuing the decentralisation initiatives envisaged in the Constitution (74th) Amendment Act It is also imperative to inject into the urban governance process elements and attributes of 'good urban governance' that will improve the quality of life of urban population, particularly the urban poor and will satisfy the norms of decentralisation, sustainability, equity, transparency,

accountability, efficiency and people's participation' (MOUD 2001 47-48)

Fiscal autonomy of the municipalities is vital for taking up important urban infrastructure projects and to take care of the immediate needs of the local urban population Implementation of the recommendations of the state finance commissions will help enhance the fiscal capability of the ULBs, necessary for improving delivery of municipal services Rationalisation of user charges, tax and non-tax reforms, property and asset management, accounting and budgeting reforms and application/ replication of best practices for innovative urban management are some important necessities for promoting effectiveness and quality of urban governance

Unfortunately the implementation of the Constitution 74th Amendment Act in the north-western region has been poor There is urgent need for implementing this Act in its true spirit It has entrusted the vital function of planning for economic and social development to the ULBs The ULBs in this region may be empowered by the states to take up this role, necessary for strengthening the vitality of urban areas There is need to define and expand the functional and financial domain of the ULBs The Mayor/President-in-council system on the pattern of Kolkata and Madhya Pradesh may be adopted for empowering the elected representatives (see Teotia 2001, 2002)

The Model Municipal Law prepared by the MOUD, with technical assistance of Financial Institutions Reform and Expansion (Debt) (FIRE [D]) Project of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and circulated to all state governments to amend their old municipal acts in conformity with the provisions of the Model Municipal Law is a good initiative towards improving the quality of governance Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and the UT of Chandigarh should prepare unified municipal acts by including important sections of the Model Municipal Law to strengthen urban governance in the region The constitution of ward committees, district planning committees and metropolitan planning committees is necessary for improving the participation of local people in urban governance (see Gupta and Teotia 2005, Teotia 2005) There is a need to break the nexus between corruption, power and governance for improving quality of governance

Management innovations by the ULBs could improve their efficiency and strengthen their resource base For example, the self-assessment system (SAS) in property tax by Hyderabad, periodic revision of the Annual Rental Value (ARV) and introduction of the optional SAS by Bangalore, introduction of SAS by Chennai, Indore and

Vishakhapatnam, computerised information system by Chennai, Indore and Ludhiana, outsourcing of bill distribution and municipal asset management by Ludhiana, Surat and Vijayawada, identification and collection of arrears through computerisation of records by Indore and Mirzapur, single window system, decentralisation of administration, periodical review of performance of municipal staff and computerisation of records by Ludhiana, online service by Vishakhapatnam and Guntur, computerised billing and collection, use of software and Geographical Information System by Chandigarh, have helped these ULBs to mobilise their resources considerably (see Gupta and Teotia 2002, Vaidya and Vaidya 2003, Planning Commission and UNDP 2003, Gupta and Teotia 2004) The ULBs of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have switched over to the Double Entry System of Accounting The selected best management innovations can be replicated by all the ULBs of the north-west region to strengthen their fiscal base for augmenting the urban infrastructure and services

People's participation in municipal/civic affairs is a prerequisite for improving the quality of governance at the local level and sustainable use of resources Several towns – Ludhiana (*mohalla* sanitation committees and park management committees), Baroda (citizens council), Chennai (EXNORA), Lucknow (Muskan Jyoti Samiti), Chandigarh (*mohalla sudhar* committees and garbage bin free scheme), Ahmedabad (Self-Employed Women's Association [SEWA]) and Cochin (Kudumbashree Scheme) – have involved local people including women in the management of municipal services and mobilisation of resources for poverty alleviation and development (see Department for International Development 1999, Gupta and Teotia 2001, 2002 and 2004) These experiments with people's participation in selected areas of infrastructure development, poverty alleviation and municipal management, can be replicated in other urban areas

Regular and intensive training The north-western states may ensure regular training of urban managers, administrators and functionaries for institutional strengthening of urban governance as skilled human resource is necessary for improving the quality of urban governance The impact of capacity building programmes being organised by regional and national training institutions for urban functionaries of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh is becoming visible in the rationalisation of user charges (Punjab, Chandigarh and Shimla), reform initiatives in tax administration (Ludhiana, Chandigarh and Shimla), urban regeneration through people's participation (Ludhiana and Chandigarh), resource mobilisation by accessing capital market by issuing municipal bonds (Ludhiana), reforms in property tax by adopting

unit area based system (Haryana and Chandigarh), and privatisation of maintenance of roundabouts and toilets and introduction of parking fees (Chandigarh), etc

Problems of Housing, Slums and Poverty

Housing

With the rapid growth of population in urban areas, interlinked problems of houselessness, slums and poverty have been acquiring alarming dimensions Despite a quantitative increase in the housing stock over successive decades, the housing situation continues to be unsatisfactory Since housing is beyond the affordability of the poor, encroachment of government land has become common, and there is a mushroom growth of unauthorised slums

Requirement of funds and land for housing in urban areas in Punjab during 1995-2002, estimated by the Socio-Economic Research Foundation (SERF 1996), is huge, that is, funds amounting to Rs 11,304 18 crores and land measuring 5,012 76 hectares Out of the amount required for financing urban housing (1995-2002), Rs 11,087 74 crores was for construction of new houses, Rs 80 89 crores for structural upgradation of houses, and Rs 136 55 crores for additions to existing houses Out of the total land required for housing during 1995-2002, 1,065 97 hectares were needed during 1995-97 and 3,946 79 hectares during 1997 to 2002 (see Gupta and Teotia 2002) This requirement of funds and land is beyond the existing fiscal capabilities of housing and urban development agencies

Haryana is worse in terms of housing shortage Acute shortages of housing, large number of slums and squatter settlements with poor sanitation and civic services have been reported from most of the towns of Haryana According to the Census of India 1991, urban areas of Haryana had a shortage of 50,786 dwelling units Even the planned city of Chandigarh is no exception to housing shortage About one-fifth of the total urban population of Chandigarh lives in substandard housing conditions Urban housing is not as big a problem in Himachal Pradesh as in Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh, but it is substandard in a large number of towns and needs upgradation The access to municipal services is also poor

Strategy for Providing Adequate Housing to the Urban Population

There is an urgent need to provide shelter to the houseless urban poor The resettlement or rehabilitation schemes to provide housing to slum

dwellers may take care of supporting infrastructure, municipal services, employment and other day-to-day needs of the people, otherwise there are chances of failure of the schemes New developments at the national level in the area of housing can promote provision of adequate housing for the urban poor in the north-western states and the Union Territory of Chandigarh

Disbursements by housing finance institutions have shown impressive growth in the country but not much funds have been used for housing for the urban poor in the north-west region Such initiatives as allowing 100 per cent foreign direct investment, private initiatives in water supply, sanitation, public transport, housing and urban development, declaring investment incentives in the form of a ten-year, 100 per cent tax holiday to enterprises responsible for developing, maintaining or operating urban infrastructure projects, incentives for reforms in rent control laws, repealing the Urban Land (Ceiling and Regulation) Act, 1976, securitisation of housing loans and operationalising foreclosure of mortgages and launching of a Mortgage Credit Guarantee Scheme for making housing credit more affordable, may increase access to housing credit to low income groups and urban poor in the region

Efforts may be made by Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh governments to conform to the objectives set by National Housing and Habitat Policy, 1998, and help urban poor in providing adequate shelter and services This could be achieved if a transparent regulatory mechanism is created to remove all legal, administrative and regulatory barriers to promote access to housing finance, construction and land development in the north-western states Housing, particularly for the urban poor, may be declared a priority area in the annual plans Infrastructure development boards could also help by raising funds for promoting housing and urban development activities in the region At the district and city/town levels, 'housing action plans' could be prepared with special emphasis on houses for the economically weaker sections/ urban poor

Social sector housing schemes for the urban poor (known as Economically Weaker Sections and Low Income Groups Schemes), in operation in the north-western states and Chandigarh, with plan provision and loan assistance from Housing and Urban Development Corporation and other financial institutions, may be strengthened 'The rate of interest should be brought down to promote housing for the urban poor, including pavement dwellers living below poverty line (BPL) The housing agenda may promote accessibility of the urban poor to housing and basic amenities' (Gupta and Teotia 2002 329)

Slums

Slums and slum population in the north-western region are growing faster than the overall population growth of the states and of the cities and towns (except in Himachal Pradesh) 'There is mushrooming growth of urban slums in Punjab Slums present a very dismal picture of a habitat unfit for human habitation, with or without minimal basic amenities and civic services' (*ibid*) According to the Census of India 2001, urban areas of Punjab have 11 52 lakh slum dwellers in 28 towns, which is about one-fifth of their population and 14 per cent of the total urban population of the state If slums in other uncovered towns is considered the figure of slum population is likely to go up considerably in Punjab

The situation is grim in Haryana and Chandigarh also, due to the growing number of slums and slum population In Haryana, the number of slums in Class I and Class II towns increased from 103 and 14 in 1981 to 224 and 132 in 1991, with an increase in slum population from 1 68 lakh and 0 73 lakh to 3 07 lakh and 2 32 lakh, in respective census years The population in slums has now increased considerably with about 25 per cent of the total urban population of the state (about 15 lakhs) living in slums in most of the Class I and Class II towns Chandigarh had 1 07 lakh (13 24 per cent of the urban population) slum dwellers in 2001 Himachal Pradesh does not have the problem of slums, but deficiencies in housing conditions and services are evident Legislative measures, schemes and programmes aimed at eradicating poverty, improving housing and environmental conditions and upgrading the level of basic amenities and civic services have not benefited slum dwellers much

The programme of Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums has not been implemented in the north-western states seriously This is reflected in the poor environmental conditions in the urban areas in general and slums in particular The main slum development scheme, that is, the National Slum Development Programme (NSDP), fully funded by the Government of India, aimed at providing basic amenities and infrastructure in slum areas, has also not been implemented effectively Studies indicate that slum development and rehabilitation schemes have not concentrated on the genuine needs of the slum dwellers They are provided plots/houses far from their workplaces and that too without adequate basic amenities, civic services and transportation facilities The corporate sector has not provided adequate housing facilities for their employees and poor wages force them to live in slums Slum dwellers also have a tendency to sell plots/houses allotted to them and again come back to the same location or establish new slums

at some other place Slum upgradation is a must for improving overall living conditions in towns

Strategy for Promoting Slum Development

Migration to urban areas needs to be regulated to control haphazard growth of slums Slum development schemes, such as NSDP may concentrate on convergence of other schemes focusing on the well-being of the urban poor Poverty alleviation schemes such as Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rojgar Yojana (SJSRY) may be implemented effectively to generate self-employment as well as wage-employment for the slum dwellers Efforts should be made to identify concentration of problem areas, as in the case of Punjab, Ludhiana has a very high proportion of slum population Chandigarh also has a large number of slums, despite its planned character A similar situation exists in several other towns in the region Therefore, emphasis may be given to addressing problems of towns with a larger share of slum dwellers and people below the poverty line

The objectives of the National Slum Policy can be achieved by the formulation of well-thought-out state-level slum policies and strategies for slum improvement on a sustainable basis Slum development strategies could focus on providing physical and social amenities, ensuring effective implementation of urban poverty alleviation and environment protection programmes Strategies may concentrate on the establishment of community-based organisations and strengthening the municipal support system and the ULBs may play a major role in slum development Active participation of the slum dwellers and other stakeholders, the convergence of sectoral and departmental schemes on housing, urban development, poverty alleviation, education, health, self-employment and wage-employment is important to achieve the objectives of the National Slum Policy and the proposed state slum policies

Poverty

'Poverty amid plenty is the world's greatest challenge' (World Bank 2000 v) The *Report of the National Commission on Urbanization* (MOUD 1988) has highlighted that the most demanding of urban challenges, unquestionably, is the challenge posed by urban poverty

> No doubt urban poverty in the *region* has declined considerably in the last thirty years But the paradox is that despite growing contribution of the cities to the state and national income, poverty exists in towns and cities in

terms of deprivations such as miserable living conditions due to poor housing, inaccessibility to basic amenities and civic services, illiteracy and poor health A decrease in the ratio of urban poor notwithstanding, their absolute number is still substantial If one adds to this the number of those who are deprived of shelter, basic urban services, education and health, the number of the poor would be much larger A survey of below poverty-line (BPL) families conducted by the State Urban Development Agency in Punjab is indicative of the concentration of BPL families in a few districts Ludhiana has the largest number of families living below the poverty line Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Patiala, Amritsar, Ferozepur and Sangrur together have about 80 per cent of the total BPL families (Gupta and Teotia 2002 334)

It seems that measurement of poverty lines even by the Planning Commission (1997, 2001) has not captured all underprivileged and vulnerable sections in the north-western states It is understood that a slight upward revision of the poverty line would considerably increase the number of urban poor The higher proportion of urban poor in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh is evident from the higher proportion of slum population, houselessness and the unemployment rate Growing problems of unemployment, houselessness and slums are likely to worsen the picture of poverty in urban areas BPL surveys conducted by these states and the UT show a higher incidence of urban poverty in these states and UT It is largely due to the rising levels of unemployment and under-unemployment rates in the north-west region

There are serious deficiencies in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes in the urban areas Lack of proper identification of beneficiaries, poor emphasis on creating community-based organisations, negligible capacity building/training support for initiating self-employment ventures, uncooperative behaviour of lead banking institutions in extending credit for self-employment activities, leakage of money/wasteful expenditure have been affecting the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes in the region State/UT governments have not utilised the full amount of grants for implementing centrally sponsored poverty alleviation programmes on a shared basis and the unutilised funds have been going back to the central government The poverty in urban areas is affecting the quality of life and its alleviation is a major challenge for strengthening the vitality of urban areas

Strategy for Urban Poverty Alleviation

State-level urban poverty alleviation policies may be formulated in the region in the light of the objectives of the national poverty alleviation

programmes The policies may emphasise on grass roots' level political empowerment of the urban poor Poverty alleviation strategies based on the active participation of the urban poor, may be prepared to focus on human, social, economic and infrastructure development Enhanced partnerships with poor communities for empowering vulnerable groups, especially women and children, capacity-building of urban poor through Participatory Learning and Action techniques, the experience of the successful implementation of programmes for mobilising women and poverty-reduction in other states, such as Kerala, will help urban areas of this region to improve the effectiveness of urban poverty alleviation programmes Special action plans could be prepared for towns/districts with a large number of BPL families The convergence of all sectoral and line-departmental schemes targeting urban poverty is also necessary

The growing towns with small volumes of houseless persons and people living below poverty line can take benefit of centrally sponsored scheme of Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana, launched in 2001 on 50 50 basis between the central and the state governments Despite construction of new dwelling units, the existing dwelling units in poor conditions can be upgraded under this scheme (Teotia 2004b 348)

Creation of a proper institutional structure, consisting of representatives of community development societies, NGOs, ULBs and other crucial stakeholders, may help address this problem Area Development Societies/*Kudumbashree* Scheme of Kerala and SEWA of Ahmedabad are successful models of poverty alleviation and women empowerment, which could be replicated in the north-western states The municipal acts could be amended to incorporate provisions in the Kerala Municipal Act, 1999, which provides allocation of two per cent of municipal income for the alleviation of poverty

Pollution Control for Environmental Protection

The growing pollution of air, water and soil in cities/towns needs to be contained For protecting the eco-systems and natural environment in urban areas of the north-west region, pollution levels may be minimised It could be achieved by switching over from diesel/petrol based traditional and polluting transportation systems to compressed natural gas (CNG)/electricity/solar energy based modern and environment friendly transportation systems and construction of more green belts and parks and plantation of trees in residential, commercial and industrial areas The scientific management of transportation, disposal and treatment of municipal solid waste and sewage is the need of the hour

Preserving Planned Character, Heritage and Landscaping of Cities

Intensive efforts may be made to preserve the planned character of the cities Haphazard growth of population in Chandigarh and many other towns is ruining their planned character The degeneration of the 'City Beautiful' is evident in the encroachment of public land, emergence of a large number of slums and the decline in the green areas due to construction of new commercial complexes, housing colonies and widening of roads, etc Efforts may be made to preserve the glory of such towns as Chandigarh, which has been described as a model town in the modern history of Indian urban architecture Preservation of the heritage of the urban areas of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Chandigarh is necessary for the preservation of our civilisation and culture Future generations could learn several innovative ideas from our traditional urban heritage The landscape of cities/towns also needs to be preserved and upgraded through the effective formation and implementation of landscape/land-use policies The landscape of Chandigarh, which has been described as a 'futuristic poem' may be preserved and the Periphery Control Act may be implemented strictly Similarly, the landscaping of other towns in the region may be done and preserved, keeping in view the future growth of population and expansion of city limits In Himachal Pradesh, which is an ecologically sensitive state, efforts may be made not to allow haphazard expansion of urban areas This is important for maintaining the ecological balance of the region

Conclusion

Growing urban challenges in the north-western states of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and UT of Chandigarh of unplanned rapid urbanisation, deficiencies in provision and maintenance of urban infrastructure/municipal services, poor quality of urban governance, housing shortage, slums, poverty, pollution, degradation of environment and landscape, etc , are affecting the vitality of urban areas Intensive efforts are required to meet these urban challenges for strengthening and sustaining the vitality of urban areas State level policies/strategies on urbanisation, urban governance, housing, slum development, poverty alleviation and environmental protection may be prepared The policies may have linkages with city level action plans and vision documents Since many urban issues are common, efforts may be made to promote interdependence and joint action plans Decentralisation/devolution of functions, finances and functionaries to the ULBs is necessary to empower and enable the institutions of local self government to take care

of local needs of the urban population Local programmes, ensuring self-help initiatives in the provision and maintenance of urban infrastructure, municipal services, mobilisation of small savings, employment generation, and poverty reduction would definitely help meet the growing urban challenges and improve the quality of life of segregated urban population Extending safety nets may check deprivations and could improve social fabric of urban settlements The well-being of the urban poor may be ensured for the harmonious growth of various constituents of the civil society Urban policy makers may concentrate on capacity building of urban managers/functionaries so that they can take care of urban problems efficiently All possible efforts may be made to improve the quality of local urban governance, which is the key to strengthening and sustaining the vitality of urban areas

Notes

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1 Escrow is a bond, deed or other document kept in the custody of a third party which takes effect only when a specified condition is fulfilled It refers to the process of loan repayment mechanism where a dedicated amount is escrowed for repayment of loans It is used by investors for safety of repayment of their loans

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Gram Panchayat and Health Care Delivery in Himachal Pradesh

Sthitapragyan Ray

This paper examines the role of Gram Panchayats in the delivery of health care services in Himachal Pradesh from both theoretical and empirical perspectives It highlights the weak points in the chain linking panchayats to rural health care delivery In an environment where the functional effectiveness of statutory village bodies seems to be low, particularly in the crucial area of primary health, new measures have to be taken up to redress the situation The paradox of successful decentralisation involves, among other things, top-down initiatives for bottom-up implementation

[Keywords civil society, decentralisation, healthcare delivery, local government, participation, social capital]

The right to health is generally seen as the state's obligation to deliver affordable and accessible health services to all (Cornwall *et al* 2002) Under the Constitution of India, public health care is a responsibility shared by the central, state and local governments, although effectively it is a state responsibility in terms of delivery Increasing people's voice and influence in the health sector is believed to be an effective way of improving the performance of health system to meet the right to health – by increasing access to services to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, by improving health outcomes generally, and by reducing health inequities Active community participation through ownership and implementation of local health services is now gaining ground as a way of ensuring such influence (Das Gupta *et al* 2000) The Alma Ata Declaration of 1978 and the 1994 International Conference on

Population and Development (ICPD) have been key motivating factors for public health service decentralisation

The importance of decentralised health care delivery systems operating through elected local governments (Gram Panchayats) in which the rural people are not only enfranchised but also empowered has been well recognised in the Constitution 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 This Act, which paved the way for the creation of statutory institutional structures at the village level – Gram Sabha (GS) and Gram Panchayat (GP) – basically aims at initiating a process of democratic decentralisation of governance and accelerating the socioeconomic development of rural areas within a participatory framework With the insertion of Part IX in the Constitution of India, the GP is empowered to manage health and sanitation, including hospitals, primary health centres and family welfare, which are among the twenty-nine vital ingredients of rural development, listed out in the Eleventh Schedule (Article 243 G) of the Constitution (GOI 1992)

Other policy initiatives in this direction include the National Population Policy (NPP) 2000 and the National Health Policy (NHP) 2002 The NPP, 2000 emphasises decentralised planning and programme implementation with high involvement of the panchayati raj institutions (PRIs), community groups and NGOs The NHP 2002 lays great stress on the implementation of public health programmes through local self-government institutions (GOI 2002a)

The Himachal Pradesh Scenario

Himachal Pradesh (HP) is predominantly a rural state – about 91 per cent of the state's population lives in rural areas The achievement of the state on a number of social indicators, including that of health, is quite impressive The infant mortality rate (IMR) of HP, at 54 2, is lower than the national average of 72 0, the crude birth rate, at 21 2, is lower than the all-India average of 28, the crude death rate, at 7 0, is lower than the national average of 9 0, women with anaemia, at 40 5, is lower than the national figure of 51 8, and children receiving vaccination, at 83 4, is higher than the all-India average of 42 0 (GOHP 2002a) The rural literacy rate of HP, at 74 38 per cent, is much higher than the all-India rural average of 59 21 per cent Only 7 94 per cent of the rural population of the state lives below the poverty line, as against the national average of 27 09 per cent (GOI 2002b)

In HP, statutory local governments (PRIs) were established in 1954 under the HP Panchayat Raj Act, 1952 With a view to bringing about uniformity by establishing the two-tier panchayat system, the HP

Panchayat Act, 1968 was enacted, and it became effective in 1970 The HP Panchayat Raj Act, 1994, enacted in the light of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, came into effect from April 1994 With this, the existing two-tier system, with GP and Panchayat Samiti, gave way to the three-tier system, with the addition of the Zilla Parishad (ZP) Accordingly, the State Election Commission, State Finance Commission and the District Planning Committees have been constituted, the District Rural Development Agencies have been merged with the ZPs, headed by the President of the latter and the panchayat elections were been held in 2000 (GOI 2001, GOHP 2002a)

The GP as the executive committee of the GS consists of a minimum of seven and maximum of fifteen members, including the Pradhan and Up-Pradhan Seats have been reserved for women, Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in the GP A GP consists of a village or a group of contiguous villages with a population of not less than one thousand and not more than five thousand

Under the HP Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 the GPs have been empowered to enquire and make report on the physical attendance and misconduct of certain public personnel, including male and female health workers The GPs have to keep a tab on the functioning of sub-centres, including their regular opening and immunisation programmes Since July 1996, the HP government has devolved certain health functions and powers to PRIs, since July 1996 These powers relate mainly to execution and monitoring of rural health and sanitation programmes The GPs have been made the appointing authority in respect of certain village-level staff, like anganwadi workers, swasthaya sahayaks, panchayat sahayaks, etc and their honorarium is to be paid by the GP The GPs have to prepare development micro plans, including Annual Health Micro Plans, based on the felt needs of the people for improving rural health and sanitation The GPs can also decide on the location of health institutions, anganwadi centres, etc and take care of their maintenance and improvement They are also expected to help in awareness-generation about reproductive and child health, maintenance of village population records, including that of births, deaths and marriages, maintenance of village sanitation and drinking water sources, and provide assistance in prevention of contagious diseases (GOHP 2002a)

The Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare of the GP is expected to take a special interest and play a key role in the health sector activities of the panchayat To enhance the effectiveness of this Committee, necessary amendments in the State Panchayat Raj Act, 1994

have been carried out The functions of the Standing Committee depend on the extent of power delegated to it by the GP

The Parivar Kalayan Salahakar Samiti (PARIKAS) – the Health and Family Welfare Advisory Committee – created by a HP Government Notification (No HFW-B(F) 7-2/2001, dated 10 December 2001) in December 2001 is expected to further boost the health and family welfare activities of village panchayats The sincerity of the state government to give powers to local bodies in health matters is evident from the fact that it has issued notifications instead of executive orders, which do not have the legal validity that notifications have That makes it more difficult for the bureaucracy to ignore them At the panchayat level, the PARIKAS is headed by the pradhan, with the health worker, male or female, as the secretary, and the membership includes the GP ward members, local NGO representatives, village opinion leaders, local social workers, office bearers of mahila mandals/women SHGs, local school teachers, forest guards, anganwadi workers and Ayurvedic doctor The Notification provides for the meeting of the PARIKAS once in a month Its functions broadly include the monitoring of rural health and family welfare programmes and supervision of the sub-centre Thus, by institutionalising community monitoring of health care delivery, the PARIKAS seeks to enforce social rather than mere bureaucratic accountability

Thus, the policy of the government on paper reflects a definite move away from the top-down, target-oriented approach to a more participatory, process-oriented approach But to what extent changes in policy conceptualisation are reflected in implementation? The GPs have apparently been empowered to plan, implement and monitor certain key rural health activities The crux of the matter that needs to be examined is the actual and effective role of the GPs in carrying out the assigned functions The social capital argument in explaining the success of local democracy (Putnam 1993, Woolcock 2000, World Bank 2001), particularly in the context of the rural health care initiatives of the panchayats in HP, is also sought to be looked at in this paper using the fieldwork data

The following were the objectives of the study

(i) Analysing the extent of devolution of health care functions and powers on the GPs
(ii) Examining the rural health care contributions of the GPs
(iii) Identifying the GPs' constraints in managing rural health care

The Research Context and Methodology

Four districts in the non-tribal lower areas of HP, which constitute 60 per cent of the state's area and account for 96 per cent of its population (Sharma 1999 2465) were identified for the study Two of these districts – Kangra and Una – are relatively developed (in terms of indicators like literacy rate, percentage of SC population, sex ratio, etc) and the other two districts – Sirmaur and Solan – are comparatively backward One block from each of the four districts was randomly selected for the study

Kangra, the most populous district in HP, accounts for 22 per cent of the state's population and about 10 3 per cent of its area The district has the second highest sex ratio of 1027 in the state It has a literacy rate of 80 68 per cent and the SCs constitute 21 17 per cent of its population (Table 1) Baijnath, a backward block of the district, consists of 51 panchayats The sex ratio and the literacy rate (for both sexes) of the block are much lower than the district average (Table 2)

Table 1 Socio-demographic Profile of Sample Districts

District	Sex Ratio*	Literacy Rate*			Percentage of SC*	Percentage of ST**
		Female	Male	Total		
Kangra	1027	73 57	88 19	80 68	21 17	0 14
Una	977	73 85	88 49	81 09	22 47	0 01
Sirmaur	901	60 93	79 73	70 85	30 17	1 16
Solan	853	67 48	85 35	77 16	31 27	0 64
HP	970	67 08	84 57	75 91	25 34	4 22

Note * Data pertaining to 2001 Census, * * Data pertaining to 1991 Census, Sex Ratio = No of females per 1000 males, SC = Scheduled Caste, ST = Scheduled Tribe
Source Census of India 2001, 1991

Sirmaur is one of the most backward non-tribal districts in HP, in fact, it figures in the list of 150 most backward districts identified by the Planning Commission, Government of India It consists of 5 per cent of the state's area and has witnessed a high decadal population growth rate It has a literacy rate of 70 85 per cent The district has one of the lowest female literacy rates (60 93%), just above the tribal district of Kinnaur It has also very low reproductive and child health indicators It has also one of the largest concentrations of the SC population (30 17%) in the state (Table 1) Shilai block of this district has very low literacy levels, for both males and females, and a sex ratio lower than the district average (Table 2)

Table 2 Socio-demographic Profile of Sample Blocks

Block/District	Baijnath/ Kangra	Shilai/ Sirmaur	Dharampur/ Solan	Gagret/ Una
Panchayats	51	28	39	41
Population	82917	32923	71173	106893
Female	40411 (48 74)	15341 (46 60)	31692 (44 53)	53917 (50 44)
Male	42506 (51 26)	17582 (53 40)	39481 (55 47)	52976 (49 56)
Sex Ratio	950	872	802	1017
Scheduled Caste	15263 (18 4)	NA	NA	23516 (22)
Scheduled Tribe	536 (0 65)	NA	NA	NA
Infant Mortality Rate	22 2		NA	4
Institutional Deliveries	NA	NA	NA	24
Literacy Rate (%)	56 85	56 74	79 71	NA
Male Literacy (%)	69 33	66 85	86 83	NA
Female Literacy (%)	44 99	44 81	71 04	NA

Note Percentage in parenthesis, NA- Not Available, Infant Mortality Rate = Number of deaths per thousand live births
Source BMO/BDO Offices, Baijnath, Shilai, Dharampur, Gagret

Solan constitutes about 3 5 per cent of the state's area and has witnessed one of the highest population-growth rates With a combined literacy rate of 77 16 per cent and female literacy rate of 67 5 per cent, the district has experienced a steep decline in sex ratio from 909 in 1991 to 853 in 2001 This is despite the higher-than-average level of urbanisation and work-participation rate in the district It has a large percentage of the SC population (31 27%) of the state and the gap between male and female literacy rates is one of the highest in the state (Table 1) The literacy rate in Dharampur block of this district is higher, but the sex ratio is lower than the district average (Table 2)

Una district, having a decadal growth rate of 18 43 per cent, constitutes about 2 76 per cent of the state's area It has a combined literacy rate of 81 09 per cent and has seen a sharp decline in sex ratio from 1017 in 1991 to 977 in 2001 The SCs constitute 22 47 per cent of the district population (Table 1) Gagret block of this district has a sex ratio higher than the district average, but the crucial 0-6 age-group sex ratio in the block is a matter of concern (Table 2)

From each of the sample blocks, six GPs were selected for detailed study, taking the total number of GPs to twenty-four in the four districts The socio-demographic indicators of the selected GPs, including the presence of CBOs (as indicative of social capital) are presented in Tables 3 1, 3 2, 3 3 and 3 4)

All the stakeholders associated with the functioning of panchayats and delivery of health services were included in the study An attempt was made to include one GP headed by a woman pradhan and one by a SC pradhan in every district In each GP, the following categories of respondents were covered six villagers from each ward or up-gram sabha (UGS), including three males and three females, were selected Out of these, one male and one female belonged to the below poverty line (BPL) category and one each to the SC category Apart from the GP pradhan, the ward panch and the GP secretary formed part of the study Among the health functionaries, the Anganwadi worker, the Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM), the Male Health Worker (MPW) and the Ayurvedic doctor, where available, were included in the survey After making allowance for field-level constraints, the final sample consisted of 144 villagers, 24 GP pradhans, 23 ward panchs, 23 GP secretaries, 23 Anganwadi workers, 18 ANMs, 12 MPWs and 6 Ayurvedic doctors (Table 4)

A set of both conventional and participatory tools was used for collection of data

(i) Information on various aspects of the functioning of rural health programmes and services, and the role and performance of GPs in it, as perceived by the villagers, was obtained by canvassing a specially designed schedule among the sample villagers Focus group discussions were also held with villagers to generate desired information Information on local mahila mandals, kisan sabhas, youth clubs, etc (as indicative of social capital) across the panchayats was collected

(ii) Data relating to the role played and constraints faced by the GP in the implementation of health programmes were collected from elected GP members at the panchayat and ward level and from the panchayat secretary also, with the help of specific schedules and informal discussions

(iii) The views and perceptions of health functionaries at the GP/sub-centre level were also gathered through schedules and discussions with the help of appropriate checklists prepared for the purpose

Table 3 1 Socio-demographic Profile of Sample Panchayats

Block/District	Panchayats					
Baijnath/ Kangra	Kunsal	Bhai	Sakari	Mahalpet	Chobin	Bandian
Population	957	1941	1473	1726	1955	1674
Female	508 (53 08)	1038 (53 48)	763 (51 8)	920 (53 30)	1087 (55 60)	896 (53 52)
Male	449 (46 92)	903 (46 52)	710 (48 2)	806 (46 70)	868 (44 4)	778 (46 48)
Scheduled Caste	430 (44 93)	710 (36 58)	708 (48 07)	725 (42)	396 (20 51)	564 (34 13)
Health Worker	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	MPW
Health Infrastructure	Nil	Sub-centre, Ayurvedic dispensary	Sub-centre	Sub-centre, Ayurvedic dispensary	Sub-centre	Civil dispensary
Dhai	1	1	1	1	1	Nil
Anganwadi Centre	1	1	1	1	1	1
NGO	Nil	1	-	1	1	2
Mahila Mandal	5	8	5	8	7	12
Kishan Sabha	1	2	1	Nil	1	Nil
Youth Club	2	1	3	1	Nil	1

Note Percentage in parenthesis
Source Field Survey and BMO/BDO Offices, Baijnath

Table 3 2 Socio-demographic Profile of Sample Panchayats

Block/District	Panchayats					
Shilai/Sirmaur	Bandli	Kando-Bhatnol	Ashyari	Milla	Naimidhar	Pab-Mar
Total Population	3037	1900	1404	2760	1465	1077
Female	1385 (45 6)	792 (41 68)	680 (48 43)	1297 (47)	700 (47 78)	536 (49 7)
Male	1652 (54 4)	1108 (58 32)	724 (51 57)	1463 (53)	765 (52 22)	541 (50 3)
Scheduled Castes	843 (27 8)	836 (44)	458 (32 62)	521 (19 27)	545 (37 20)	221 (21)
Health Worker	2 Village Health Guides	ANM, 3 Village Health Guides	ANM, 2 Village Health Guides	ANM, 2 Village Health Guides	ANM, 4 Village Health Guides	Nil
Health Infrastructure	Nil	Sub-centre	Sub-centre Pvt Clinic	Sub-centre, Ayurvedic dispensary, Pvt Clinic	PHC, Civil Dispensary, Sub Centre, Ayurvedic Dispensary, Pvt Clinic	Sub-centre, Civil dispensary
Dhai	2 Trained, 5 Untrained	3 Trained, 4 Untrained	1 Trained, 3 Untrained	1 Trained, 2 Untrained	1 Trained, 4 Untrained	1 Trained, 2 Untrained
Anganwadi Centre	4	3	2	3	1	2
Kishan Sabha	1	2	1	1	2	3
Youth Club	2	1	2	1	3	2
NGO	1	2	1	Nil	2	Nil
Mahila Mandal	5	7	5	5	4	4

Note Percentage in parenthesis
Source Field Survey and BMO/BDO Offices, Shilai

Table 3 3 Socio-demographic Profile of Sample Panchayats

Block/District	Panchayats					
Dharampur/ Solan	Badhlag	Gharsi	Hudung	Baria	Nahari	Surajpur
Total Population	2274	1338	1571	1608	1463	1800
Female	1167 (51 31)	622 (46 49)	793 (50 48)	755 (47)	709 (48 5)	859 (48)
Male	1094 (48 69)	716 (53 51)	778 (49 52)	853 (53)	754 (51 5)	941 (52)
Scheduled Caste	1342 (59 01)	230 (19)	963 (61 30)	739 (46)	610 (42)	624 (35)
Health worker	ANM	ANM	Nil	ANM	ANM	ANM
Health Infrastructure	Sub-centre	Sub-centre	PHC	PHC, Sub-centre, Pvt Clinic	Sub Centre, Civil dispensary	Sub-centre, Pvt Clinic
Dhai	2 Trained, 6 Untrained	3 Trained, 5 Untrained	2 Trained, 6 Untrained	2 Trained, 2 Untrained	2 Untrained	1 Trained, 2 Untrained
Anganwadi Centre	4	2	2	3	1	3
Kishan Sabha	1	1	2	2	1	1
Youth Club	3	2	2	2	2	2
NGO	1	1	Nil	1	Nil	Nil
Mahila Mandal	6	5	4	5	4	4

Note Percentage in parenthesis
Source Field Survey and BMO/BDO Offices, Dharampur

Table 3 4 Socio-demographic Profile of Sample Panchayats

Block/District	Panchayats					
Gagret/Una	Sanghnai	Badoh	Oel	Ambota	Deoli	Ghanari
Total Population	2682	2161	1718	4493	1868	1951
Female	1332 (49 7)	1075 (50)	867 (50)	2097 (46 7)	1056 (56 53)	956 (49)
Male	1350 (50 3)	1086 (50)	851 (50)	2396 (53 3)	812 (43 47)	995 (51)
Health Worker	ANM, MPW	ANM	ANM, MPW	ANM, MPW	ANM, MPW	ANM, MPW
Health Infrastructure	Sub-centre, Pvt Clinic	Sub-centre	Sub-centre, Ayurvedic dispensary	Sub-centre, Pvt Clinic	Sub Centre, Pvt Clinic	Sub-centre, Pvt Clinic
Dhai	5 Trained	4 Trained	4 Trained	5 Trained	5 Trained	4 Trained
Anganwadi	4	3	2	5	4	3
Kishan Sabha	1	1	2	1	1	1
Youth Club	1	1	1	2	2	1
NGO	1	Nil	Nil	1	Nil	Nil
Mahila Mandal	4	4	4	5	4	5

Note Percentage in parenthesis
Source Field Survey and BMO/BDO Offices, Gagret

Table 4 District-wise Distribution of Sample Respondents

Category of Respondents	Kangra	Sirmaur	Solan	Una	Total
Villagers	36	36	36	36	144
GP Pradhans	6	6	6	6	24
Ward Panchs	6	6	5	6	23
GP Secretaries	6	5	6	6	23
Anganwadi Workers	6	5	6	6	23
ANMs	5	3	4	6	18
MPWs	1	3	3	5	12
Ayurvedic Doctors	2	1	2	1	6
Total	68	65	68	72	273

Source Field Survey

While primary data had been collected from stakeholders by administration of structured schedules and holding of discussions on above lines, secondary data and information were obtained from various offices and reports of the state and central governments and other published sources and websites, wherever feasible, with due acknowledgement The study was carried out during June–November 2003

Background Characteristics of Sample Respondents

There were equal number of men and women among the sample villagers More than half of them (53%) were SCs, about 8 per cent were OBCs and the rest (39%) belonged to general categories About 42 per cent of the respondent villagers were in the official BPL category A large majority (88%) of them were literate Many of the sample villagers (64%) were having membership in or association with civil society groups like mahila mandals, youth clubs, kisan sabhas, NGOs, SHGs, etc (Table 5)

Out of the twenty-four GP Pradhans interviewed, fifteen (62 5%) were men and nine (37 5%) were women, 29 per cent of them belonged to the SCs and 8 3 per cent to the OBC categories, and 12 5 per cent of them were from the BPL families A large number of them (62 5%) were having membership in or association with civil society groups While a majority of them were educated up to higher secondary or higher level, only one was found to be illiterate

Of the twenty-three ward panchs, thirteen (56 5%) were male and ten (43 5%) were female, and 43 5 per cent belonged to the SC and 13 per cent to the OBC categories While 22 per cent of them came from BPL

Table 5 Background Characteristics of Sample Villagers

District	Sex			Caste				BPL Status		
	Male	Female	Total	SC	OBC	OC	Total	BPL	Non-BPL	Total
Kangra	18 (50 0)	18 (50 0)	36 (100 0)	13 (36 1)	8 (22 2)	15 (41 7)	36 (100 0)	15 (41 7)	21 (58 3)	36 (100 0)
Sirmaur	18 (50 0)	18 (50 0)	36 (100 0)	22 (61 1)	0 (0 0)	14 (38 9)	36 (100 0)	19 (52 8)	17 (47 2)	36 (100 0)
Solan	18 (50 0)	18 (50 0)	36 (100 0)	22 (61 1)	3 (8 3)	11 (30 6)	36 (100 0)	16 (44 4)	20 (55 6)	36 (100 0)
Una	18 (50 0)	18 (50 0)	36 (100 0)	20 (55 6)	0 (0 0)	16 (44 4)	36 (100 0)	15 (41 7)	21 (58 3)	36 (100 0)
Total	72 (50 0)	72 (50 0)	144 (100 0)	77 (53 5)	11 (7 6)	56 (38 9)	144 (100 0)	65 (45 1)	79 (54 9)	144 (100 0)

table (continued)

District	Literacy			CBO Membership		
	Literate	Illiterate	Total	Yes	No	Total
Kangra	32 (88 9)	4 (11 1)	36 (100 0)	21 (58 3)	15 (41 7)	36 (100 0)
Sirmaur	30 (83 3)	6 (16 7)	36 (100 0)	25 (69 4)	11 (30 6)	36 (100 0)
Solan	31 (86 1)	5 (13 9)	36 (100 0)	19 (52 8)	17 (47 2)	36 (100 0)
Una	33 (91 7)	3 (8 3)	36 (100 0)	27 (75 0)	9 (25 0)	36 (100 0)
Total	126 (87 5)	18 (12 5)	144 (100 0)	92 (63 9)	52 (36 1)	144 (100 0)

Note Percentage in parenthesis *Source* Field Survey

families, 44 34 per cent reported membership in or association with local civil society groups Of the twenty-three anganwadi workers (all women). 26 per cent were SCs and others belonged to the general category A majority of them (78 3%) have studied up to higher secondary level Of the six Ayurvedic doctors, four were men, two belonged to the OBC category and none of them had been provided with official residence at the place of work

Out of the sample of twenty-three GP Secretaries, twenty-one (91 3%) were men While about 29 per cent of them were SCs, the rest belonged to the general category Out of the total of 18 ANMs covered, about 21 per cent belonged to the SCs, 12 per cent to the OBC and the rest (about 67%) to the general category While the majority (61%) was given official residence near the sub-centre, just about 17 per cent were making use of it Of the twelve MMWs interviewed, one-fourth belonged to the SC category, half to the OBC category and the rest to the general category None of them had been provided with official accommodation

Findings of the Study

Role of Gram Panchayat

Only about 6 per cent of the sample villagers said that they had gone to the GP with a health issue and just about 3 per cent reported lodging a complaint against the health staff with the GP But just about 1 percent of the villagers interviewed replied in the affirmative about some action being initiated by the GP on their complaints

About 60 per cent of the GP pradhans reported having discussed health issues in the GP/GS meetings Potable water and sanitation seemed to be the most discussed issue Even so, in most cases, villagers had looked after their own sanitation without much assistance from the GP and its role in drinking water was limited to purifying water sources

Just about 45 per cent of the ANMs and MPWs reported getting GP assistance in community mobilisation and related health activities While about 90 per cent of MPWs reported attending GS meetings during the last one year, about 60 per cent of the ANMs reported so More than 90 per cent of the villagers interviewed denied having any knowledge about organisation of health camps or community mobilisation efforts by GP Panchayat swasth sahayak, a grass roots level health worker – appointed by and accountable to the GP – had not been appointed in most of the study panchayats More than 90 per cent of sample villagers. 80 per cent of GP pradhans and 75 per cent of sub-centre level health staff said that there was no appointment of a swasth sahayaks in their panchayats GP's

role in resource generation for health and related activities is negligible The role of GP in the registration of births, deaths and marriages seemed to be up to mark But, here also, the lack of co-ordination between GPs and the grass roots level functionaries of sectoral departments involved in the registration process, like the ANMs and the anganwadi workers, is quite palpable Only about 28 per cent of GP pradhans and ward panchs reported discussing infant- and child-mortality matters in GP and ward meetings As far as family planning is concerned, GP's role was negligible Even in matters of information dissemination, the anganwadi workers and ANMs are the primary sources for villagers

Nevertheless, a large majority of villagers (69%), ward panchs (75%) and GP pradhans (85%) still believed that effective involvement of GPs would improve health service delivery in terms of greater participation of people in health programmes, more people friendly service delivery and greater accountability at the cutting edge level, and better maintenance of sub-centre facilities, including medicine availability and greater popular willingness to pay user fees But, typically, public health functionaries had low expectations from panchayats, as just 9 per cent of Ayurvedic doctors and less than half of the MPWs, ANMs and anganwadi workers believed so

Role of Standing and Advisory Committees

As many as half the GP pradhans interviewed reported that there was no standing committee on health in their panchayats While just about one-third of the ANMs and MPWs reported having a standing committee in their areas, more than half of them said that the committee had not involved them in any discussion or programme

As far as the constitution and functioning of the health advisory committee (PARIKAS) is concerned, there is considerable variation in the responses of sample villagers and public functionaries at the grass roots level While just 16 out of 144 villagers (about 11 %) were aware of PARIKAS, 44 out of 59 public functionaries (about 75 %), including panchayat secretaries, ANMs, MPWs and Ayuvedic doctors were aware of the same This is natural considering the fact that PARIKAS has been created by a notification of the Government of HP Hence, the public functionaries, even at the grass roots level, were more aware of its existence than the villagers Thus, the high degree of ignorance about the PARIKAS among the sample villagers is particularly telling because it is designed as a civil society watchdog body to make health service providers accountable to their clients

Role of Civil Society

There is a significant presence of civil society groups in the study villages in the form of mahila mandals, SHGs, kisan sabhas, youth clubs, etc All the interviewed villagers, panchayat pradhans, ward panchs, ANMs, MPWs, Ayurvedic doctors and anganwadi workers acknowledged the existence of these community-based organisations in the study villages A large majority of the sample villagers, panchayat pradhans and ward panchs (about 60%) confirmed their association with or membership in these organisations However, no concerted effort has been made by the panchayats to involve the community-based organisations in their health efforts

Annual Health Micro Plans

In a decentralised system of health service delivery, the GPs are expected to play a key role in planning for the health needs of the villagers, based on a participatory community needs assessment (CNA) approach With a shift from the target-oriented to a more process-oriented approach, there is greater premium on it However, over 75 per cent of villagers had no idea of the CNA, as their health needs had not at all been assessed by the GPs Interestingly, a little less than half the GP pradhans and about half the GP secretaries and ward panchs claimed that the CNA had been carried out A majority of the ANMs and MPWs (85%) claimed so

Capacity Building

Training and capacity building of panchayat members or at least of the members of the GP health committees can go a long way in empowering them and in enhancing the accountability of local public service providers However, this emerged as a highly neglected area, notwithstanding claims to the contrary Only about 15 per cent of panchayat pradhans and ward panchs reported having received any training on the role of panchayats in the rural health sector About 58 per cent of ANMs and MPWs received training on the role of panchayats in the health sector None of the panchayat secretaries and Ayurvedic doctors interviewed had undergone any training in this field Among other factors, the neglect of capacity building of the key stakeholders had taken its toll in terms of non-preparation of CNA, low awareness levels, defunct health committees, etc

Anganwadi Centre

A large majority of the villagers (94%) expressed satisfaction with the performance of anganwadi workers They had not only ensured adequate nutrition to children, but also played a key role in immunisation programmes and in awareness-generation about antenatal services While there is adequate coordination between the anganwadi workers and the ANMs, the same was conspicuous by its absence between the panchayats and the anganwadi workers None of the sample anganwadi workers bothered to inform the GP about cases of malnutrition, while the ANM concerned was informed about the same About 48 per cent of panchayat pradhans had no clear idea of the role of anganwadi centre and its workers

Discussion

C Collins rightly points out that 'decentralisation is a complex process and can't be recommended across the board, without taking into account historical, political, social and geographical realities' (1989 170) Unlike the north Indian states such as Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, HP has a relatively less polarised social structure and a well-developed primary education and health infrastructure which compares favourably with that of Kerala While HP villages are far from egalitarian, the divisions of caste, class and gender that have been so pervasive elsewhere in North India are not so sharp here (L R Sharma 1987 68, Singh 1998 207, PROBE Team 1999, Dreze and Sen 2002 107) The positive features of HP rural social structure, like the less hierarchical and divisive caste relations, very low incidence of landlessness, relatively equal access to productive resources like common property resources, and progressive gender relations, have not only created favourable conditions for collective local action and village democracy, but also reduced the danger of 'local capture' by local elites and the consequent derailing of positive public interventions by social divisions and privileged local interests (L R Sharma 1987 158, Singh 1998 207, Dreze and Sen 2002 109) The sense of village community in HP has also facilitated the emergence of consensual social norms on local village institutions and public services, including health centres, panchayats, mahila mandals, etc (Sarkar 1999)

Here the notion of 'social capital' assumes significance in explaining the success of local governments (Putnam 1993 182, Evans 1997, Sundaram 1997 48, Woolcock 2000, World Bank 2001) Social capital refers to the relations of trust and co-operation and networks and

organisations which can promote co-operative actions (Putnam 1993 167, Woolcock 2000) Social capital, it is argued, promotes development by making local governance and public service delivery more effective in terms of enhancing popular participation, accountability and transparency (Putnam 1993 182, Fukuyama 1995 356, Krishna 2000 72, Uphoff 2000 215, World Bank 2001) In the case of rural HP, as Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen put it succinctly, 'the general concern with social capital can be extended to more precise links between co-operative action and development and also to the historical and material roots of social co-operation' (2002 108)

Our findings also attest to the rich social capital base of the study villages, as all the sample respondents confirmed the existence of and a large majority (about 60%) acknowledged their membership in or association with mahila mandals, SHGs, kisan sabhas, youth clubs, etc To use the language of social capital advocates like the World Bank (2001), we find the existence of two types of social capital, namely, the 'bonding' and the 'bridging', in the civil society of the study villages The bonding social capital that is, the relations of trust, based on neighbourhood, kin and gender having been transformed into the bridging social capital, that is, the relations of trust across the different socio-demographic groups (like the SHGs, mahila mandals, etc) in the rural areas The bridging social capital is expected to provide the basis for what the World Bank (2001) calls the 'linking social capital', which links the rural people to the state apparatus, including the public service providers That linkage was conspicuous by its absence in the rural health care sector of the study areas The panchayats could have provided the platform for building up of relations of trust and co-operation between villagers and the local public health personnel and thereby could have enhanced the embeddedness of the public health functionaries among their client groups The potential of the local SHGs, mahila mandals, youth clubs and the specially designed bodies within the panchayat framework to ensure civil society participation in its health activities, like PARIKAS, could have been utilised for deriving synergy and ensuring complementarity between their actions There is a need to recognise that social capital inheres not just in civil society, but also in an enduring set of relationships that spans the public-private divide (Evans 1996 1122)

The proponents of social capital would have us believe that the HP villages provide the perfect setting, with their rich social capital base, relatively egalitarian social relations, popular participation in local body elections (more than 75% voter turnout in the 2000 panchayat elections), functioning of a grass-roots level non-party democratic system and non-

political electoral mobilisation in panchayat elections, in which candidates are judged primarily on the basis of their merit, performance and also caste factors (Sud 2001 2126-27), for a certain magic to work – enhancing local government (GP) performance through higher levels of accountability and participation However, that magic had failed mainly because of a failure to derive synergy from a three-way dynamics between local government (GP), civil society and the state government While the synergy between state initiative and co-operative action has been one of the cornerstones of the schooling revolution in HP (PROBE Team 1999, Dreze and Sen 2002 109), the absence of these elements, has led to very disappointing results in the case of health care delivery

The synergy between state initiative and co-operative action has also been one of the key factors underlying the success of decentralised rural health care initiatives in Kerala, with which HP shares the common asset of 'social preparedness' (Dreze and Sen 2002 110, see also Harriss 2001 123-24) This thesis is also very convincingly demonstrated in another developing-country context by Judith Tendler (1997) in the Ceara province of northeast Brazil, one form of strategic state intervention in the primary health sector involved deliberate efforts at building up of relations of trust (or linking social capital) between officials and people, which was earlier lacking Once established, these trust relations led to productive and mutually beneficial interactions between them, resulting in better performance of public health programmes and reduction in infant mortality

All this highlights the fact that the realisation of the potential of participatory grass roots democracy, even under otherwise favourable conditions, depends crucially upon the establishment of a positive political context and external linkages or what is called the linking social capital There is no short cut to successful decentralisation initiatives, particularly in the health sector Successful and sustainable decentralisation cannot be achieved by administrative fiat, for it involves a political process, which ironically has to be initiated and, if necessary, sustained from the above Romantic communitarian visions to the contrary represent a gross political misjudgement

Conclusion

In terms of the criteria for assessing local government (GP) performance – formulation of local (health) plans based on community needs assessment, mobilisation and management of resources (financial, human, material and 'social capital'), communication and awareness generation and (health) programme implementation – the GPs in the

study areas have performed poorly They have failed to translate the information advantage into an efficiency advantage The passing of laws, formulation of policies and issuance of notifications have not served the purpose Thus, there is a gap between the decentralised approach to health service delivery on paper and the form it has taken on the ground Three distinct yet related sets of explanatory factors have been identified lack of effective devolution of powers and resources on the panchayats, inadequate capacity building of GP members, and poor involvement of active civil society groups However, more important than all this, the study calls attention to the political economy of decentralisation and the need for a high degree of political commitment or interest-group support for the success of these initiatives Further studies might attempt to understand better the mechanisms that link such support, or lack of it, to the implementation of decentralised health care initiatives in rural HP

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The Gender Gap in Literacy and Education among the Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand and West Bengal

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This article focuses on the gender gap in literacy and education among the Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand and West Bengal as measured by the gender disparity index The female literacy rates among the Ho and Mahali in Jharkhand and the Lodha in West Bengal are low, with high gender disparity, as compared with other tribes The gender disparities among most of the tribes tend to increase at the higher level of school education The article also analyses the enrolment ratios and dropouts of female children, and discusses the issues related to tribal education

[Keywords scheduled tribes, gender disparity literacy, education, enrolment, dropouts]

Introduction

The gender gap in education can be understood in the overall context of the position that women occupy in society The status of women in India is generally low They are one of the disadvantaged sections of the society 'The cycle of disadvantage starts before birth and continues from neglect of female children through to widowhood The problem is exacerbated further when gender disadvantage is compounded by class, caste and religious discrimination' (Wazir 2000 19) The gender discrimination has been formalised and institutionalised through a plethora of cultural norms and practices and this has contributed in no small measure to gender gap or gender disparity in all spheres of life This has further led to inequality of status between men and women

Although modern democratic institutions grant equality of opportunity to all citizens irrespective of caste, class and gender, the cultural discriminatory practices limit women from exercising their rights to avail themselves of the opportunities provided by the state Notwithstanding the granting of equality by the Constitution of India, it has not drastically altered the practices associated with gender inequality (Béteille 2002)

The gender gap in literacy and education is an important dimension of gender inequality, and it is contingent on social, cultural and economic factors When discriminatory cultural practices intervene in precarious living conditions of the marginalised groups, poverty becomes a prime factor for persistence of gender gap in literacy and education Women belonging to marginalised groups such as the Scheduled Tribes (STs) are more vulnerable to economic hardship The occupation of the majority of tribal people is agriculture, whose productivity is generally low, and the majority of them live below the subsistence level Tribal children contribute to the family income by participating in the family occupation and other household work like cattle grazing, and fuel and fodder collection Since a high proportion of children is involved in survival tasks, many tribal children are prevented from enrolling in schools (Sujatha 1987, NSSO 1990) As girl children are also engaged in domestic chores such as sibling care, besides survival tasks, they are less likely to get enrolled in school

Cultural practices and poverty are, no doubt, prime factors influencing educational participation, especially of girls But there are other factors responsible for India's poor performance in reducing the gender gap in education Lack of proper and adequate infrastructural facilities for girls, lack of vision in designing school curriculum appropriate to the needs of girl children, introducing a uniform pattern of formal structure of education without considering the needs of specific area or the groups, and poor quality of education are the other factors influencing the participation of girls in education

The enrolment ratio and retention of girls in school are dependent on demand and supply functions of education The factors that influence the demand for education are (a) the motivational level of the parents to send their daughters to school, (b) greater gender equity within the family and community with respect to decision-making, (c) the nature of occupations pursued by the parents that do or do not demand of the girls to do exhausting household duties and economic activities, (d) the income level of the parents, and (e) the attitude towards girl child The factors that influence supply side are (a) content and quality of education imparted, (b) accessibility to school, including distance between residence

and school, (c) availability of female teachers, and (d) separate toilet and other facilities specific to girls

Malavika Karlekar (2000) has examined in detail the demand and supply side constraints that impede girls' access to education if motivational level of the parents is low for sending their daughters to school, if there is gender bias within the family and a demand for household chores, and if the household is afflicted with poverty, the enrolment ratio of girls will be low, with high probability of dropouts On the supply side, sub-standard education, poor accessibility (including long distances to be covered between school and residence), and non availability of female teachers and separate toilets for girls contribute to low rates of enrolment of girls

Education of girls is critical in reducing the gender disparities in other spheres of life Hence, the reduction of gender disparities in education is a necessary condition to reduce gender disparities in other spheres of life Achievement in female education is an important step towards 'women empowerment – a process of capacity building to facilitate women's freedom, open up opportunities for women to participate in decision making process in more effective way both within and outside the family' (Ghosh 2003 65) It also helps in initiating income-generating activities Education plays a crucial role in breaking the cycle of disadvantage it provides meaningful skills which enhance 'women's labour market capabilities' and serve as 'a catalyst of emancipatory struggles' (Wazir 2000 19)

This article analyses the gender gaps in literacy and education among the STs of Jharkhand and West Bengal

Tribal Situation in Jharkhand and West Bengal

The tribal region of Chota Nagpur and Santal Paraganas was a part of Bihar till the formation of the Jharkhand state Jharkhand was carved out of Bihar on 15 November 2000 It has rich mineral and forest resources The tribal people who have lived for centuries in this resource-rich region have been victims of rapid industrialisation They have suffered dispossession of land due to industrialisation and exploitation by private traders and money lenders They have faced continuous decline in their means of livelihood They spearheaded the movement for a separate state of Jharkhand that became a reality in 2000

The Santals are the largest tribal community in Jharkhand The other major tribal communities are Munda, Oraon, Mahali, Ho and Lohara As per the 2001 Census, 26 3 per cent of the total population in the state of Jharkhand were tribal The male and female literacy rates of STs in

Jharkhand were 54 0 per cent and 27 2 per cent respectively, with a gender gap of 26 8 percentage points The tribal people have lived in the midst of non-tribal for several generations and have imbibed a number of Hindu beliefs and rituals Some of them have been converted to Christianity Some sections of Oraons and Santals are well educated and have settled in the towns of Ranchi and Hazaribagh

The tribal communities of this region differ widely among themselves in their levels of socioeconomic development The number of people living entirely by hunting and food gathering is very small There are, however, a few tribal communities still devoted to shifting cultivation These are Asur, Birjia, Hill Kharia and Sauria Paharia However, more than 90 per cent of the tribal population follows settled agriculture and plough cultivation in villages Some tribal communities like Mahali and Chik Baraik are good artisans and they make excellent baskets

The tribal groups such as Santal, Munda, and Oraon in the northwestern parts of West Bengal share some common characteristics with their counterparts in Jharkhand They belong to the same ethnic stock and speak the same tribal dialect Some of these tribal groups had migrated from the present Jharkhand region and settled long ago in Bankura and Birbhum – the neighbouring districts of West Bengal – and some others migrated to the plains of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts They work in tea plantations as labourers

Santals constitute the largest tribal community in both Jharkhand and West Bengal The other major tribes are Munda, Lodha, Bhumij, Oraon and Mahali The majority of tribal population are small/marginal farmers and landless agricultural labourers As per the 2001 Census, 5 5 per cent of the total population of West Bengal was tribal The male and female literacy rates of STs in West Bengal were 57 4 per cent and 29 2 per cent respectively, with a gender gap of 28 2 percentage points While the gender gap is quite high in both the states, it is interesting that West Bengal, with a marginally higher overall literacy rate and male literacy, also has a marginally higher gender gap than Jharkhand (28 2% and 26 8% respectively)

Tenancy reform in West Bengal has made a favourable impact on agricultural productivity and income among the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the STs in the rural areas But it has had little impact on literacy The level of literacy among the ST households is much lower than that of the general population The physical infrastructure in tribal pockets is poor and the provision of basic public services, including education, is particularly inadequate for rural women (GOWB 2004)

Data and Methods

The data on which this article is based were primarily obtained from a survey conducted by the Council for Social Development, New Delhi on the profile of SCs and STs in Jharkhand and West Bengal (see Mukherji and Ghosh 2003) The survey was carried out in 2000-2001 in one panchayat each in the districts of Dumka and West Singbhum and the industrial town of Ranchi in the state of Jhakhand, and one panchayat each in the districts of Bankura, Burdwan and Darjeeling and the semi-urban town of Jhargram in the state of West Bengal The sample size of tribal households covered was 540 in Jharkhand and 536 in West Bengal The Munda, Oraon, Santal and Mahali were common to both the states, whilst the Ho and Lohara in Jharkhand, and the Bhumij and Lodha in West Bengal were specific to the respective states The macro-level data on literacy at the state level (Census 2001) have also been analysed to find the overall gender gap between general population and STs

The gender gap in education exists both at the level of literacy and education and in the enrolment ratio of boys and girls in schools The most common method of measuring the gender gap in literacy is the difference in terms of the percentage of literacy between males and females The higher percentage gap between men and women indicates greater gender gap between men and women The gender gap in literacy and education can also be measured by gender disparity index

Gender Disparity Index (GID)[1] is the ratio of female-to-male literacy within the scale of 0 000 to 1 000 The lower female literacy in relation to male literacy is indicated by the score that is always less than 1 000 The lower the score on the scale 0 000 to 1 000, the greater the gender disparity between female and male in literacy In other words, a higher score indicates lower gender disparity, conversely, a lower score indicates higher gender disparity We have calculated the gender disparity index both at the level of literacy and at the level of elementary education on the basis of data collected from the field

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)[2] is the ratio of recorded number in the relevant groups enrolled in elementary classes (classes I-VIII) and the estimated number of children in the age-specific groups (6 to 14 years) Separate enrolment ratios for male and female children have been calculated on the basis of primary enrolments data collected from the field

Gender Gap in Literacy and Education among Selected Tribes

The literacy rate of STs in rural areas of Jharkhand is lower than that of all-India figures of STs, for both males and females, but it is same for

males and lower for females in urban areas In West Bengal, the literacy level of males and females is lower than that of all-India figures for STs both in rural and urban areas Table 1 shows the level of literacy and gender disparity among the general population and the ST population at the all-India and at the levels of the states of Jharkhand and West Bengal

Let us now examine the gender disparity in literacy and education of individual STs in our sample areas In Jharkhand, the Hos, with the lowest female literacy, have the highest gender disparity (0 476) (see Table 2) The Mahalis come next, and their gender disparity (0 548) is

Table 1 Literacy and Gender Disparity among General Population and Scheduled Tribes

State	% of Literacy (Rural)			% of Literacy (Urban)		
	Male	Female	GDI	Male	Female	GDI
All India (General)	70 7	46 1	0 668	86 3	72 9	0 845
All India (ST)	57 4	32 4	0 565	77 8	59 9	0 770
Jharkhand (General)	60 9	29 9	0 491	87 0	70 0	0 804
Jharkhand (ST)	51 7	24 4	0 472	77 8	57 4	0 737
West Bengal (General)	73 1	53 2	0 727	86 1	75 7	0 879
West Bengal (ST)	56 6	27 9	0 492	68 6	48 2	0 703

Source Census of India 2001

Table 2 Effective Literacy among the Scheduled Tribes in Sample Villages in Jharkhand

Tribe	Number of Households	% of Literacy			GDI
		Male	Female	Persons	
Ho	184	51 7	24 5	38 2	0 476
Lohara	58	61 0	50 4	55 9	0 826
Mahali	48	56 1	30 9	44 2	0 548
Munda	37	92 2	79 2	85 5	0 858
Oraon	63	96 2	89 1	92 6	0 926
Santhal	150	65 5	47 9	56 6	0 738
Total	540	64 7	45 8	55 2	0 708

Source Primary data collected by the Centre for Social Development, New Delhi

somewhat lower than that of the Hos The urban-based Oraons and Mundas have very high female literacy, with least gender disparity (0 926 and 0 858) Both urban-based Lohara and rural-based Santal have very low gender disparities (0 826 and 0 738)

When these individual tribes in our sample areas in Jharkhand are compared with the ST category at the state level, there is hardly any difference in gender disparity among the Hos The Santals and Mahalis have lower gender disparity than the state-level disparity of STs in rural areas The Loharas, Mundas and Oraons also show lower gender disparity than the state level gender disparity of STs in urban areas

In West Bengal, the Mundas have the highest female literacy with the lowest gender disparity (0 910), followed by the Oraons (0 728) (see Table 3) The Mahalis and the Santals are the tribes in the middle range, with moderate gender disparity (0 664 and 0 625 respectively) The Lodhas are at the bottom, with the lowest female literacy and the highest gender disparity (0 613) Some tribes like the Hos and the Mahalis of Jharkhand and the Lodhas of West Bengal need special attention as regards the literacy level of their females

Table 3 Effective Literacy among the Scheduled Tribes in Sample Villages in West Bengal

Tribe	Number of Households	% of Literacy			GDI
		Male	Female	Persons	
Bhumij	72	84 9	69 1	77 3	0 813
Lodha	44	43 3	26 6	35 5	0 613
Mahali	22	72 0	47 8	60 4	0 664
Munda	22	67 4	61 4	64 4	0 910
Oraon	78	72 5	52 8	62 9	0 728
Santhal	298	63 0	39 4	51 5	0 625
Total	536	67 9	46 3	56 8	0 689

Source Primary data collected by the Centre for Social Development, New Delhi

Any analysis of gender disparity in literacy level will remain incomplete unless the gender disparities at various levels of education are considered There is a sharp decline in the percentage of people attaining education beyond the elementary level With respect to educational attainments of STs, it was found that a majority of tribal population has attained education up to the primary and middle level There is a significant percentage of dropouts of both males and females at the higher level of education It is more pronounced among the tribes in West Bengal than their counterparts in Jharkhand (see Tables 4 and 5)

Table 4 Levels of Education among the Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand

Tribe	Primary and Middle			Secondary and Senior Secondary			Undergraduate, Graduate and Postgraduate			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Ho	155 (62 5)	88 (73 3)	243 (66 0)	87 (35 1)	26 (21 7)	113 (30 7)	6 (2 4)	6 (5 0)	12 (3 3)	248	120	368
Lohara	68 (76 4)	60 (87 0)	128 (81)	17 (19 1)	8 (11 6)	25 (15 8)	4 (4 5)	1 (1 5)	5 (3 2)	89	69	158
Mahali	43 (74 2)	24 (82 8)	67 (77 0)	14 (24 1)	4 (13 8)	18 (20 7)	1 (1 7)	1 (3 4)	2 (2 3)	58	29	87
Munda	30 (36 1)	22 (28 9)	52 (32 7)	30 (36 1)	26 (34 2)	56 (35 2)	23 (27 7)	28 (36 8)	51 (32 1)	83	76	159
Oraon	44 (28 9)	57 (38 8)	101 (33 8)	52 (34 2)	53 (36 1)	105 (35 1)	56 (36 8)	37 (25 2)	93 (31 1)	152	147	299
Santhal	142 (70 0)	119 (76 3)	261 (72 7)	59 (29 1)	36 (23 1)	95 (26 5)	2 (1 0)	1 (0 6)	3 (0 1)	203	156	359
Total	482 (57 9)	370 (61 9)	852 (59 6)	259 (31 1)	153 (25 6)	412 (28 8)	92 (11 0)	74 (12 4)	166 (11 6)	833	597	1430

Source Primary data collected by the Centre for Social Development, New Delhi

Table 5 Levels of Education among the Scheduled Tribes in West Bengal

Tribe	Primary and Middle			Secondary and Senior Secondary			Undergraduate, Graduate and Postgraduate			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Bhumji	147 (81 7)	130 (98 4)	277 (88 8)	31 (17 2)	2 (1 5)	33 (10 6)	2 (1 1)	-	2 (0 6)	180	132	312
Lodha	30 (76 9)	14 (66 7)	44 (73 3)	7 (17 9)	7 (33 3)	14 (23 3)	2 (5 1)	-	2 (3 3)	39	21	60
Mahali	34 (94 4)	22 (100)	56 (96 6)	2 (5 6)	-	2 (3 4)	-	-	-	36	22	58
Munda	25 (80 6)	26 (96 3)	51 (87 9)	3 (9 7)	1 (3 7)	4 (6 9)	3 (9 6)	-	3 (5 1)	31	27	58
Oraon	114 (83 2)	80 (84 2)	194 (83 6)	20 (14 5)	13 (13 7)	33 (14 2)	3 (2 2)	2 (2 1)	5 (2 1)	137	95	232
Santhal	341 (77 5)	240 (89 9)	581 (82 2)	86 (19 5)	25 (9 4)	111 (15 7)	13 (2 9)	2 (2 6)	15 (2 1)	440	267	707
Total	691 (80 0)	512 (90 8)	1203 (84 3)	149 (17 3)	48 (8 5)	197 (13 8)	23 (2 7)	4 (0 7)	27 (1 9)	863	564	1427

Source Primary data collected by the Centre for Social Development, New Delhi

What is most conspicuous in West Bengal is that the percentage of tribal people who have attained primary education is the highest, but the percentage of those who have attained education beyond the primary level is the lowest, with higher gender disparities Except for a few tribes, the gender disparity increases at the higher levels of school education (see Table 6)

Table 6 GDI at Different Levels of Educational Attainment among the Scheduled Tribes in Sample Villages in Jharkhand and West Bengal

Jharkhand			West Bengal		
Tribe	Primary and Middle	Secondary and Senior Secondary	Tribe	Primary and Middle	Secondary and Senior Secondary
Ho	0 558	0 294	Bumij	0 982	0 072
Lohara	0 940	0 502	Lodha	0 532	0 875
Mahali	0 612	0 313	Mahali	0 703	0 000
Munda	0 687	0 812	Munda	1 090	0 348
Oraon	1 240	0 976	Oraon	0 737	0 682
Santhal	0 804	0 586	Santhal	0 725	0 299
Total	0 758	0 586	Total	0 781	0 339

Source Primary data collected by the Centre for Social Development, New Delhi

If we compare the two states, the gender disparities among the STs in West Bengal increase substantially In some tribes, such as the Mahalis, there is no female who has attained secondary or senior secondary level of education The gender disparity among most tribes in these two states tends to increase from elementary level to secondary and senior secondary level While the analysis of data on the urban-based Mundas shows a decreasing trend in gender disparity as we move from elementary to secondary and senior secondary level, the urban-based Oraons show a favourable ratio of female literacy in relation to male literacy at the elementary level and marginal gender disparity at the secondary and senior secondary level

Gross Enrolment Ratio

In Jharkhand, the gross enrolment ratio is 74 3 per cent for ST boys and 48 3 per cent for girls belonging to age group 6-14 years, with a gender enrolment gap of 26 0 percentage points (GOI 2000) In our study area, the gross enrolment ratio of urban-based female Oraons is the highest (97 7%) among the selected tribes, followed by the Loharas (86 7%) and the Mundas (82 8%), with very low gender enrolment gaps (see Table 7) Surprisingly, the Lohara girls exceed the gross enrolment ratio of boys

Among the rural-based Santals, the gross enrolment ratio of girls is very close to that of the Mundas The gross enrolment ratio of Ho girls is the lowest (37 6%), with the highest gender enrolment gap, followed by the Mahalis (56 0%), with a higher gender disparity

Table 7 Enrolment of Students (6-14 years) among the Scheduled Tribes in the Sample Villages in Jharkhand and West Bengal

Tribe	Jharkhand			Tribe	West Bengal		
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total
Ho	105 (77 2)	50 (37 6)	155 (57 6)	Bhumij	50 (94 3)	48 (84 2)	98 (89 1)
Lohara	36 (65 5)	39 (86 7)	75 (75 0)	Lodha	16 (59 3)	3 (18 8)	19 (44 2)
Mahali	29 (80 6)	14 (56 0)	43 (70 5)	Mahali	16 (94 1)	14 (82 4)	30 (88 2)
Munda	19 (86 4)	14 (82 4)	33 (84 6)	Munda	11 (91 7)	15 (88 2)	26 (89 7)
Oraon	27 (100 0)	42 (97 7)	69 (98 6)	Oraon	52 (100 0)	44 (92 8)	96 (96 9)
Santhal	76 (84 4)	82 (82 8)	158 (83 6)	Santhal	195 (90 7)	108 (63 9)	303 (78 9)
Total	292 (79 9)	241 (66 6)	533 (73 2)	Total	340 (90 4)	232 (72 3)	572 (82 1)

Source Primary data collected by the Centre for Social Development, New Delhi

In West Bengal, the gross enrolment ratio is 88 1 per cent for ST boys and 75 2 per cent for ST girls (GOI 2000) In our study area, the gross enrolment ratio of girls is the lowest among the Lodhas (18 8%), with very high gender enrolment gap (see Table 7) Conversely, the gross enrolment ratio is the highest among the Oraons (92 8%), with a low gender enrolment gap The gross enrolment ratios of girls among the Mundas, the Bhumijs and the Mahalis are also very high, with lower gender enrolment gaps The gender gap in gross enrolment is the highest among the Lodhas The gross enrolment ratio of girls among the Santals is lower than the state-level gross enrolment ratio of ST children, with high gender enrolment gap

A survey conducted by the National Council Applied Economic Research Survey in 1994 showed that, as compared to other social groups the magnitude of 'never-enrolment' in schools is the highest among tribal children 48 per cent among girls and 32 per cent among boys in rural areas (see Nambissan 2000 188) In our study areas in Jharkhand, the 'never-enrolment' in school is 62 4 per cent among the Ho girls and 44 0 per cent among the Mahali girls In West Bengal, it is

the highest among the Lodha girls, with 81 2 per cent Corresponding figures for the boys are 28 2 per cent among the Hos and 19 4 per cent among the Mahalis in Jharkhand, and 40 7 per cent among the Lodha in West Bengal

Dropout at Elementary Level of Education

We do not have state-wise figures for dropout of children in the age-group 6-14 years Our analysis of dropout of these children is confined to the data from the study areas Among the Oraons, the Mundas and the Loharas, who are largely urban-based in Jharkhand, the dropout rate for the females is the lowest among the Mundas (7 1%), followed by the Oraons (16 7%), and, surprisingly, it is the highest among the Loharas (43 6%) Among the rural-based communities – the Hos, the Santals and the Mahalis – the dropout rate is the lowest among the Mahalis (21 4%), followed by the Santals (25 6%) and the Hos (28 0%) The dropout rates for boys are less than that for girls Although the Loharas have one of the highest rates of enrolment for girls, the dropout is also the highest (43 6%) among them On the one hand, this indicates the definite urge for education with a very high female enrolment rate, and on the other hand, it points to the operation of factors compelling them to withdraw from education at an early age

In West Bengal, the dropout rate among the ST girls is the lowest among the Oraons (15 9%), followed by the Bhumijs (18 7%) and the Santals (20 4%) The dropout rate is the highest among the Munda girls (40 0 %) The dropout rate among the Bhumij girls is lower than that of boys The Lodhas stand with the lowest female enrolment, with dropout rate of 33 per cent

Among the STs in Jharkhand, 24 per cent of the female children belonging to the age group 6-14 years have dropped out from school without completing the elementary education due to the need for sibling care, and 32 per cent, due to preoccupation with household duties and assisting their families in agricultural activities In West Bengal, sibling care accounts for as high as 61 per cent of the dropouts, and participation in household duties accounts for 25 per cent of the dropouts

The female children become the first victims of economic hardship Twenty-eight per cent of the ST girls in Jharkhand and 6 per cent in West Bengal dropped out because of economic hardship The school atmosphere in tribal areas too encourages the dropout phenomenon In many cases, it has not been possible to find a teacher with suitable background to serve in tribal schools Absence of proper toilet facilities for girls, poor infrastructural facilities, distance from home, non-availability of female teachers are the other reasons for lack of interest among girls in studies

Indifference to studies accounts for 16 per cent of dropouts in Jharkhand and 8 per cent, in West Bengal

Ashram School for the Tribal Communities

Ashram schools have been viewed as an effective institution to meet the educational needs of tribal boys and girls living in the most backward and scattered habitations where opening of formal schools is not found to be viable These schools are residential, offering free boarding, lodging and other facilities and incentives to the tribal boys and girls The policy documents recognise the importance of tribal culture for schooling of the tribal communities (see GOI 1962 and 1984) Ashram schools are seen as culturally appropriate for tribal children and they continue to be a major recommendation of governmental policy (GOI 1989)

Despite the emphasis laid on ashram schools, their inability to relate to the tribal situation has come in the way of spreading education in the tribal areas The ashram schools, in practice, are not very different from other schools A study of ashram schools in six states revealed that in practice the curriculum of these schools did not differ from that of the formal school system (see Sharma and Sujatha 1983) The ashram schools were not provided with adequate infrastructural and teaching materials as in the case of primary schools in the tribal areas P R G Mathur's observations on the residential schools for tribal children in Wynad district of Kerala cast serious doubts on the quality of education offered to them The students were being taught in badly constructed and poorly maintained school-buildings with inadequate toilet and drinking-water facilities He found the academic environment in these schools to be extremely poor because of sharing of textbooks by 2-3 students and sharing of classrooms by students of class I-IV (Mathur 1992)

A study conducted by the Council for Social Development, New Delhi in 1997-1998 revealed that infrastructural facilities like drinking water, bathroom and toilet facilities were inadequate in ashram schools in Bihar (including Jharkhand) and West Bengal Sport, medical and library facilities, and teaching rooms and teaching materials were lacking in varying degrees in ashram Schools The tribal girls faced more problems than the tribal boys due to lack of proper and adequate infrastructure in residential schools (Nagi 2000) Poor physical and academic environment of ashram schools give no encouragement to tribal students to participate in education

Most of the students informed that the main reason for their not doing homework was lack of comprehension of classroom teaching, due to non-availability of textbooks and related materials Female students

faced these problems more severely than male students The teachers in ashram schools also faced problems in teaching because they were not familiar with the tribal languages Students too faced the problem of language It has been observed that a very high percentage of single-teacher schools are operating in the tribal dominated areas

> The presence of single-teacher or even two-teacher schools in tribal areas is of concern because of the extremely poor quality of instruction that results when one or two teachers are expected to teach five primary school classes Handling more than one class calls for pedagogic skills in which teachers are rarely trained Hence, little or no learning takes place in the class room and teachers are concerned mainly with controlling diverse groups of children rather than communicating lessons effectively to them (Nambissan 2000 191)

The National Commission for Women (NCW) observes that 'if that teacher is absent, it entails closure of the group and an end to all efforts for promotion of education among the tribals' (1994 80) An official report of the Government of India comments 'What are still more shocking was that a number of schools, especially in the tribal areas, had remained closed for certain period of time and in a number of cases these schools had not functioned since the beginning of the academic year' (GOI 1988 300)

Conclusion

The gender gap in education can be understood in the wider context of the disadvantaged females in India It varies across states and social groups, particularly with respect to SCs and STs Some tribes in Jharkhand and West Bengal are in greater need for special attention for enhancing their literacy and educational levels The female literacy rates among the Ho and the Mahali in Jharkhand and the Lodha in West Bengal are low and gender disparities high compared with other tribes Expectedly, the female enrolment ratio is lower among these tribes than that of their males

Another finding is that the gender disparity among most tribes in Jharkhand and West Bengal tends to increase at higher levels of school education This, however, is a general phenomenon all over India What is striking is that there is a sharp decline in the enrolment immediately following the primary level of education The trend continues with significant percentage of dropouts of males and females at higher levels of education Interestingly, it is more pronounced among the tribal communities in West Bengal than in Jharkhand What is paradoxical in

West Bengal is that, while the percentage of tribal people who have attained primary education is the highest, their education beyond primary level is the lowest, with higher gender disparities

We have analysed the factors responsible for dropout among the tribal children During agricultural operations these children are required to assist their family members in sowing, weeding, plantation and harvesting operations This results in their irregular attendance in classes, later leading to their dropping out of schools The stereotype school calendar does not relate at all with the agricultural cycle, identifying seasons during which the services of children may be in demand by the family A substantially higher proportion of tribal children, including girls, are engaged in survival tasks, such as collection of firewood and fetching water, tending livestock and so forth, as compared with the average rural child Economic hardship is a major factor for drop out of the tribal children Sibling care and other household chores are equally pressing factors for dropout among the girl children Indifference to studies is often cited as a reason for dropout But this so-called indifference is the result of a combination of various factors, including those cited above The non-availability of schools within easy access for more than half the predominantly tribal habitations poses a serious impediment to enrolment of children, particularly girls Unattractive, poor quality of schooling provided for tribal children is far from offsetting the normal impediments that come their way

The magnitude of 'never-enrolled' among the tribal children is very high, particularly among the Ho and the Mahali girls in Jharkhand In West Bengal, it is the highest among the Lodha girls, constituting more than three-fourth of the total tribal girls belonging to specific age group

Ashram schools have been viewed as an effective institution for meeting the educational needs of tribal boys and girls living in the most backward and scattered habitations Infrastructural facilities like drinking water, and bathroom and toilet facilities are inadequate in such schools, sports and medical facilities, and teaching rooms and teaching materials are far from satisfactory

Initiatives have been taken by the governments in providing low-cost primary schooling in the form of single- or two-teacher schools in sparsely populated tribal habitations But this experiment has not brought desired results When one or two teachers are expected to teach five classes, the quality of teaching would be expectedly poor Hence, little is taught in the classroom and teachers have to spend most of their time in controlling diverse groups of children Irregular attendance of teachers and frequent closure of schools are among the important causes for dropout of tribal children

To achieve gender equity in education it is necessary to take up initiatives on supply and demand sides of education that affect enrolment of girl children and their retention in school education NGOs can play an effective role in promoting their education through innovative interventions The motivational level of parents to send their daughters to school can be raised only by creating better learning environment through improved teaching methods, curriculum suited to the needs of tribal girls, more women teachers, eco-friendly school buildings and classrooms, separate toilets for girls and other child care centres, lowering the direct and indirect costs of girls education, improving access by reducing distance to schools, developing flexible school calendar and mode of teaching around girls' domestic chores, promoting literacy training of parents, and using multiple delivery systems – formal, non-formal and other alternative – suited to the tribal areas

Notes

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1 *Gender Disparity Index* (GID) devised by G Chakraborty (1999) is as follows
Given that

x is the total male population 6 years and above
xp is the male population at a given level of education
y is the total female population 6 tears and above
yp is the female population at a given level of education

$$\frac{yp}{y} \times \frac{x}{xp} = \text{the gender disparity index (GDI)}$$

2 *Gross Enrolment Ratio* (GER) devised by the author is as follows
Given that

Ne^m = Number of male children enrolled in the relevant age group
Nm = Number of male children in that specific age group
Ne^f = Number of female children enrolled in the relevant age group
Nf = Number of male children in that specific age group

$$\text{GER of male} = \frac{Ne^m \times 100}{Nm}$$

$$\text{GER of female} = \frac{Ne^f \times 100}{Nf}$$

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DISCUSSION

M.N. Srinivas, Max Weber, and Functionalism

Recently, two leading sociologists have commented on M N Srinivas's engagement – rather lack of it – with Max Weber In his M N Srinivas memorial lecture, 'The Sociology of Hinduism Reading "Backwards" from Srinivas to Weber', published in *Sociological Bulletin* (55 [2], May-August 2006), T N Madan states 'The only reference to Weber in Srinivas's writings that I know of is the argument about the lack of appropriate ideological resonance in Hinduism for the endogenous development of capitalism It is a very short comment (in a co-authored encyclopaedia article) (Srinivas and Shah 1968 364)' (Madan 2006 227-28) Secondly, in his introduction to *Anti-Utopia Essential Writings of André Béteille*, Dipankar Gupta has made a few observations about the 'heydays' of Srinivas at the Department of Sociology in the Delhi School of Economics in the 1960s He observes that Srinivas had hardly any engagement with Weber, and also that 'The ruling theory of the day was that of functionalism ' (2005 1-2) Lack of engagement with Weber is linked here with dominance of functionalism I write this note to present certain facts to set the record right

I

In 1956, Milton Singer published a paper, 'Cultural Values in India's Economic Development',[1] in the well-known journal, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* He raised a number of issues on the subject, in the course of which he referred to Weber's ideas on the relation between asceticism and economic activity, developed in his book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, (1930) In 1958, another well-known journal, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, published in response to Singer's paper a discussion on 'India's Cultural Values and Economic Development' between four scholars John Goheen, M N Srinivas, D G Karve, and Milton Singer[2] It began with Goheen's note focusing on, as he stated,

'the relevance of the Weberian thesis to the Indian situation' (1958a 9) Srinivas (1958) wrote a long note on Goheen's note, dealing with three questions (i) tradition of practical values in India, (ii) why this tradition has not been successful in improving the conditions of life of the people, and (iii) diversity of Hindu philosophical values, both old and new Throughout the note he cited his field experiences in rural India in general and Rampura village in Karnataka in particular Srinivas's note was followed by Karve's comments (1958), Goheen's note (1958b) on Srinivas's note, and Singer's postscript (1958) This discussion was published in the same year the English translation of Weber's German book on the religion of India was published (1958), but none of the four scholars referred to it Apparently, the discussion was planned and the participants wrote their notes before the book was available to them Notably, this happened when Srinivas was at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

In 1959, if not earlier, Srinivas closely interacted with Reinhard Bendix, author of the well-known intellectual biography of Weber (1959) Bendix acknowledged Srinivas's 'detailed criticisms and suggestions' on the chapter, 'Society and Religion in India', in this book (*ibid* iii) Bendix also came to the Department of Sociology, University of Delhi as a visiting professor in 1959-60 at Srinivas's invitation

In 1970, Srinivas participated in a conference on 'Occupational Cultures in Changing South Asia', at the University of Chicago He did not contribute a paper, but was a discussant for three papers Milton Singer edited the proceedings and published the book in 1973 It includes two chapters by Srinivas Chapter XII comments on Hanna Papanek's paper, 'Pakistan's New Industrialists and Businessmen', and Richard Fox's paper, 'Pariah Capitalism and Traditional Indian Merchants Past and Present' (Srinivas 1973a 275-78) Chapter XIII comments on Singer's paper, 'Industrial Leadership, the Hindu Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism' (Srinivas 1973b 279-86) Srinivas discusses Weber's ideas in both the chapters, but the latter is a lengthy critique of Weber's ideas on Hinduism He first questions Weber's identification of the ideas of *samsara*, *karma* and the ritualism of caste as constituting the 'dogmatic foundation' of Hinduism, and his 'ethnocentric' assumption that every religion has, or ought to have, a 'dogmatic foundation' He shows how Weber, in his construction of Hindu ethic, missed the acephalous nature of Hinduism, the changes occurring in it continually for centuries, and the diversities of caste and sect Srinivas comments, 'The charge of oversimplification must be laid at Weber's door' (*ibid* 279) He then discusses the problem of relation between modernization and traditional

culture, and concurs with Singer's conclusion that 'traditional institutions are compatible with modern industrial organizations' (*ibid*)

Madan's main argument in the Srinivas memorial lecture is that, unlike Weber, Srinivas was concerned more with behaviour than with belief Srinivas's chapter XIII in Singer's book, however, is different He discusses here various issues with reference to (a) philosophical and theological ideas in Sanskritic tradition, such as *advaita*, *ashramas*, *bhakti*, *janmas*, *leela*, *pralaya*, *purusharthas* and *vratas*, besides *samsara* and *karma* mentioned above, and *kayakave kailasa* (literally, 'work is heaven'), a Lingayat idea in Kannada, (b) scriptures such as the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *puranas*, and (c) ancient/medieval philosophers and theologians such as Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhva, and modern social reformers such as Aurobindo, Gandhi, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, and Tilak

The chapter ends with a sharp comment on Weber

> The tendency to revive Weber may lead to a restatement of the view that Asians cannot modernize without throwing all their traditional culture out It may also be used to 'flatter the ethnocentric conceits of Europeans and Americans' It may serve to keep people in different parts of the world apart when the need is for them to come together in a collective undertaking for the abolishing of poverty and ignorance wherever found (*ibid* 286)

II

I have read and heard ad nauseam that Srinivas was a structural-functionalist It is true that Srinivas wrote his DPhil thesis on the Coorgs at Oxford University under the influence of structural-functionalism of A R Radcliffe-Brown in the late 1940s However, many commentators do not know that on Radcliffe-Brown's retirement E E Evans-Pritchard became Srinivas's supervisor Evans-Pritchard differed from Radcliffe-Brown on many issues, including functionalism However, he did not ask Srinivas to change his thesis according to his ideas Only at the stage of its publication by Clarendon Press, Evans-Pritchard suggested to Srinivas that he might like to change it Srinivas showed his unwillingness, and the thesis was published as it was written under Radcliffe-Brown's supervision [3]

The fact that the Coorg book (1952) was functionalist did not make it less of a classic One of the reasons for its acclamation was that functionalism was a major advance on the earlier pseudo-historical theories of evolutionism and diffusionism, both of which had influenced

the study of Indian society and culture Many commentators have failed to appreciate – some do not even know – the fact that Srinivas wrote his Oxford thesis on the basis of data collected for his earlier PhD thesis (consisting about 800 pages, bound in two volumes) at Bombay University under G S Ghurye's supervision He applied the functionalist approach to the same data, and that made the Oxford thesis different Incidentally, failure to grasp the importance of functionalist critique of pseudo-history is not uncommon in Indian sociology

Srinivas's functionalism was short lived Change began to take place in Oxford itself Despite the Coorg book being structural-functionalist, Evans-Pritchard sponsored Srinivas's appointment as lecturer at Oxford Srinivas thus became part of development of new ideas in social anthropology at Oxford under Evans-Pritchard's leadership When he left Oxford and came to the M S University of Baroda as its first professor and head of the department of sociology in 1951, he immediately prescribed Evans-Pritchard's little book, *Social Anthropology* (1951) as a text-book for BA students, and also asked them to read Evans-Pritchard's Frazer Lecture, *Divine Kingship of the Shilluk of the Nilotic Sudan* (1948) I was one of these students [4]

This does not mean that Srinivas gave up structural-functionalism altogether in Baroda In fact, its strong influence was visible in the classrooms, in seminars, and in personal conversations for two years or so after he came to Baroda However, change came soon thereafter He began to talk and write about social change The first publication indicating this transformation came in 1955 The Indian Conference of Social Work had organised a national seminar on 'Casteism and Removal of Untouchability' in Delhi in 1955, Srinivas was its Director and his colleague I P Desai its Secretary General A number of distinguished academics as well as public men, including S Radhakrishnan, Jagjivan Ram and Govind Ballabh Pant, attended the seminar Srinivas presented a paper, 'Castes Can they exist in the India of Tomorrow?'[5] It was published in the report on the seminar (1955) as well as in *Economic Weekly* (1955) Srinivas published several other papers on social change during his stay in Baroda, the most notable being 'Sanskritisation and Westernisation' (1956) and 'Caste in Modern India' (1957)

The shift away from functionalism was visible also in the research work of Srinivas's doctoral students in Baroda While some of them worked in the traditional fields of caste, tribe and religion, some others worked in new fields Srinivas planned to open up for sociological research social sectors signifying changing India Thus, N R Sheth worked on heavy industry, R D Parikh on the print media, V H Joshi on

economic development and social change in a rural area, and I on historical sociology [6] The syllabi for the BA and MA programmes also began to include topics and books on social change

A concern for ideas of Weber and other thinkers also began As mentioned earlier, Srinivas contributed a note to the Weber-centred discussion in *Economic Development and Cultural Change* in 1958, and also perhaps began his interaction with Reinhard Bendix soon thereafter He also participated in the debates and discussions on these thinkers among a remarkable group of social scientists in Baroda at that time his departmental colleague I P Desai, political scientist Rajni Kothari, economist Iqbal S Gulati, historian Satish Chandra Misra, archaeologist B Subbarao, and several others

III

The main point is that when Srinivas came from Baroda to Delhi University in 1959, his intellectual baggage did not consist only, not even dominantly, of structural-functionalism The latter was of course a part of it but one of many parts, including Weber

In Delhi, Srinivas continued his work on the study of social change He published two seminal books on the subject during the 1960s *Caste in Modern India and Other Essays* (1962) and *Social Change in Modern India* (1967) As regards many papers on the subject, I would draw attention only to the titles of papers in his bibliography in Shah, Baviskar and Ramaswamy (1996 219-26)

Srinivas carried forward in Delhi University a broad vision of comparative sociology, which included sociology as well as social anthropology and the best of what they offered Its first telling testimony was the syllabus he prepared for the M A programme as soon as he joined the university As far as I know, he prepared it single-handed [7] It was not restricted to structural-functionalism Other theories and approaches, including the Weberian one, were also represented in it adequately When I joined the department in October 1961, I recall, I first taught Max Gluckman's *The Judicial Process among the Barotse of Northern Rhodesia* (1955) under the paper, 'Fieldwork Monographs' This was not a functionalist work, and Gluckman was known to have been influenced by Marxism I then taught Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930) and a few of the essays in the collection, *From Max Weber Essays in Sociology* (1947), as part of the paper, 'Sociology of Religion', and consulted Bendix's biography of Weber (1959) Srinivas's two essays on Weber mentioned earlier (1958, 1973b) and Bendix's book were recommended to students for reading,

and at least the brighter students read them I for one never felt that the ruling theory in the department was functionalism

The doctoral students in the department during the 1960s worked on a variety of topics, and hardly any of them was under the spell of functionalism I invite attention to the list of topics of PhD theses given in the Handbook of Information of the department To name a few, André Beteille wrote on caste, class, and power, R Jayaraman, on plantation labour in Sri Lanka, Karuna Chanana, on women undergraduate students, E A Ramaswamy, on conflict between trade unions and between them and factory owners, Baviskar, on cooperatives and politics, and Anand Chakravarti, on contradiction and change in a village

Thus, structural-functionalism was not the ruling paradigm in Srinivas's personal research and writing, in his students' research, and in the teaching programmes, in Baroda and Delhi Of course, he had his own preferences, but he did not impose them on others Surely, he did not agree with Weberian approach, but that did not prevent him from including Weber's books in the teaching programmes and from allowing freedom to others to pursue Weber's thought in their work

After Srinivas left Delhi and went to Bangalore in 1972, his mind worked in many different directions If he could write a paper, 'On Living in a Revolution' (1986), later publish a book with the same title (1992), and write another paper, 'An Obituary on Caste as a System' (2003), surely he was very far away from structural-functionalism then

Notes

I thank B S Baviskar, P C Joshi, Tulsi Patel, E A Ramaswamy and N R Sheth for their comments on the draft of this note

1 It seems Singer was provoked to write this paper on reading certain observations on India made by Eleanor Roosevelt in her book, *India and the Awakening East* (1953) He devoted more than a page in the beginning of the paper on discussing her observations

2 Goheen was professor of philosophy at Stanford University, and Karve, Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India

3 To understand the relation between Srinivas, Radcliffe-Brown and Evans-Pritchard, see Srinivas's several autobiographical pieces in his anthology (2002 656-58, 675-79, 700-05, 711-12)

4 For a more comprehensive account of Srinivas's life and work in Baroda, see Shah (2007)

5 Interestingly, Srinivas's one of the last few papers was entitled, 'An Obituary on Caste as a System' (delivered as a lecture in Bangalore, Delhi and Kolkata under different titles, and published posthumously in 2003)

6 All these theses were published Sheth (1968), Parikh (1965), Joshi (1966), Shah (2002)

7 Srinivas joined the department of sociology as professor in February 1959, and was the only member of the department at least till the end of June – three more members seem to have joined only in the beginning of July Srinivas drafted the MA syllabus, piloted it through the various authorities of the university, received its final approval in April, and its teaching began in the middle of July

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Response to Shah

I am grateful to Professor Shah for drawing attention to Srinivas's 'Some comments on Mitton Singer's "Industrial Leadership, the Hindu Ethic and the Spirit of Socialism"' (1973) The title of the piece pinpoints its intentionally limited scope Of its seven-and-a-half pages a little under four-and-a-half are devoted to Weber in the specific context of Singer's paper Srinivas's criticism focuses mainly on what he considers Weber's Eurocentric arbitrariness in, first, looking for a 'dogmatic foundation' in 'an acephalous religion' and, then, selectively, simplistically and misleadingly identifying the ideas of *karma* and *samsara* as constituting the same Srinivas criticises Weber for failing to recognise both the *Gita* as a scriptural source for a 'work ethic' and 'the lack of fit between the sacred literature and existential reality' He also castigates Weber for an alleged lack of awareness of how caste actually functions

Not only are Srinivas's comments brief (rather than 'a lengthy critique'), they also ignore much of what Weber writes about Hinduism and the 'heterodoxies' in his book, including the clear recognition of historical processes on the ground, notably the twin processes of 'intensive' and 'extensive Hinduisation', which (as I said in my essay [see Madan 2006]) anticipated Srinivas's discussion of Sanskritisation and more besides There is a striking similarity here of both conceptual formulation and phraseology It is a pity Srinivas nowhere commented on this convergence

As for the search for a dogmatic foundation, let me recall that Weber wrote early in his book that 'the concept of dogma is entirely lacking' in Hinduism (*The Religion of India*, p 21) He does, however, say later that *samsara* and *karma* 'are the truly "dogmatic" doctrines of Hinduism' (*ibid*, p 118) The double quotation marks are Weber's, indicating his reservations about the use of the term, but there is an apparent contradiction here, an uncertainty rather than assertiveness as Srinivas's comments suggest Moreover, it may not be denied that these concepts are common to all Indic religious traditions and, as reported in ethnographical literature, known in one sense or another among all castes They *are* of critical importance

Regarding the *Bhagavad Gita*, Weber does indeed discuss varieties of 'professional ethic' in this text (devoting about eleven pages to it), contrasting different (Brahman, Kshatriya) *varna dharmas* All routes lead to what he calls the 'redeemer religiosity' (*ibid* 187), a point also made by most commentators on this work Srinivas's enumeration of certain religious preceptors, concepts and styles is necessarily brief,

contained in the very same four-and-a-half pages that I mentioned above It is not the kind of engagement with various categories of Indic religious traditions that one finds in Weber's 400 pages long book – which does not at all mean that one agrees with all of Weber's judgments I reiterate here what I wrote in my essay Sociologists of Hinduism must take both Srinivas and Weber seriously

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BOOK REVIEWS

Avijit Pathak: *Modernity, globalisation and identity Towards a reflexive quest* Delhi Aakar Books, 2006, 175 pp , Rs 350 (hb) ISBN 81-87879-61-0

The book under review successfully proposes the thesis that it is not only possible but a worthwhile effort to humanise modernity and make it more reflexive, symmetrical and egalitarian in content Although this argument is not being proposed for the first time, Avijit Pathak has presented a comprehensive review of the writings on the theme, in order to build his own argument Critiquing the notion of 'Western Modernity', the author demonstrates, on the basis of appropriate examples from every-day-life situations, that the experience of modernisation in different societies has resulted in conflicting and contradictory, instead of homogeneous, experiences, out of which Pathak feels the urge to evolve an alternative life-affirming modernity

The arguments proposed in the book are based on a review of studies and writings, mostly sociological, on the subject of modernity, with particular reference to India For substantiating his argument, Pathak has relied heavily on a few Indian sociologists – Dipankar Gupta, T K Oommen, Yogendra Singh, etc While the whole argument of the critical sociologists, as also the kinds of the works published by G Ritzer (*Globalisation of Nothing*) come very close to Pathak's proposals, one misses a detailed discussion on these authors in the book Methodologically speaking, it seems, he has been too selective while choosing texts in order to substantiate his view point

The book opens with the argument that while the core values of modernity – that is, freedom, criticality, democratisation, openness and optimism for the future, etc – have a liberative potential, its practice often causes arrogance and violence, proposing an inherent superiority of modernity, emanating out of scientific criticality, objectivity and universal knowledge However, every society has experienced modernity in a

culture- specific manner, with a hybridity of cultures, both traditional and western Citing the case of India, Pathak refers to Dipankar Gupta's phrase 'mistaken modernity' to bring home the superficial nature of modernisation in Indian society with a complete absence of technical efficiency and professionalism, so characteristic of western modernity

However, Pathak looks at the situation as an optimist and argues that there is no necessary inconsistency between modernity and humanity or for that matter spirituality One can clearly find in the book an urge to spiritualise modernity Rather than looking for a homogenised global society, a 'multiplicity of sites' is possible Pathak has used the concept of 'multiple modernities' to designate the variety of ways in which each society internalises the experience of modernity, giving out a peculiar manifestation of it Furthermore, he argues that, instead of modernity replacing tradition, both may co-exist as in the case of Indian society, where modernity may be practised along with tradition (for example, western medicine combined with yoga) Modernity has also often created situations conducive to assertion of traditional identities, for example, caste identity boosting the process of political democratisation Even in global situations, Indian communities have been successfully preserving their traditional cultural identities, for example, celebration of Durga Puja by Indian immigrants in the USA and so on All these instances point to the possibility of not one but a variety of manifestations of modernity, in amalgamation with tradition

Critiquing the process of globalisation that has largely been asymmetrical, with an unequal standing of different cultures, the author hopes for a symmetrical globalisation, characterised by a dialogue necessitated by a positive art of resistance, which is constructive for a new world rather than being just an act of negation An elaborate discussion is presented on the question of identities, with the argument that these are never fixed but negotiable The author looks for a society where these identities, broad and small, do not stand hierarchised, but are converted into differences that are symmetrical, comfortable, open, humble and dialogic

Instead of conceptualising, as a result of modernisation and globalisation, a state of homogenisation, it is argued that differences could be celebrated in a world that is shared across cultures, genders and classes While modernity, on the one hand enhances individuality and ethnicisation, it also, on the other hand, helps in evolving a cultural sensitivity to appreciate unity and empathy, often leading to an inclusivism engulfing the whole of humanity

Pathak pleads for a spiritually regenerated modernity, with enough dialogic space to negate the ongoing asymmetrical globalisation Though

he talks at length about the limiting forces in his goal of an alternative modernity, he only refers to the narrow social identities of caste and gender, more or less overlooking the larger processes of politico-economic nature that have actually shaped the outcome of modernity at the global level Moreover, he suggests that the spiritualised modernity may be achieved by (a) a social environment where differences are not allowed to get hierarchised, (b) doing away with the identities that are not necessarily desirable, for example, caste, (c) constituting a public sphere that is shared and is secular, and (d) evolving a sensitivity appreciating empathy and inclusivism

An inclusivist, rather than the prevailing exclusivist, project of modernity, stripped of the arrogance and inherent superiority it has so far boasted of, could be evolved While the philosophical strength of the argument is well taken, Pathak will find it hard to escape the utopian imagery that he repeatedly has attempted to disown in the book Social identities which he has talked about are not merely social, their formation, continued prevalence and subsequently, their culmination into practice are politically articulated within the context of modernised institutionalised structures of power

The book is, no doubt, promising in that it presents a point of view, not just critical of the official version of modernity, but a constructive, optimistic alternative to it that is closer to the agenda of a humane, egalitarian and empathetic society, modern in its flavour and symmetrical in essence

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Carol Schick, JoAnn Jaffe and Alisa M. Watkinson (eds.): *Contesting fundamentalisms* Delhi Aakar Books, 2006, x + 175 pp , Rs 500 (hb) ISBN 81-87879-67-X

Have you ever wondered why Osama Bin Laden has not been arrested and killed so far? Not even by the all powerful American Army! JoAnn Jaffe, one of the co-editors of *Contesting Fundamentalisms*, argues,

> the public stage has been monopolised by the symbiotic conflict between two great fundamentalisms The right-wing Christian United States President George Bush and the leader of the Islamic Al Qu'eda movement, Saudi Arabian Osama Bin Laden, have been each other's best friends, the later, in fact, through his activities helping President Bush to pursue American imperialism In order to be both 'exclusive' and 'universal', the

fundamentalist identity, often leads to a type of nationalism where religion and nation coincide as it happened in the case of the United States of America

The belief that 'United States is special' and 'Americans are morally superior' has helped in the emergence of the feeling of 'American exceptionalism' which has been used to distinguish real Americans from foreigners It is also used to proclaim the mission of the United States to deliver God's infinite justice and destroy the evil-doers In a nutshell, American hyperpatriotism has emerged as a new fundamentalism

American fundamentalism, to some extent, rests solely on Islamic fundamentalism, the latter often implying a negative connotation Volker Greifenhagen argues that fundamentalism is commonly associated with the attempt to revive archaic modes of conduct and belief from the past In this time of crisis, the West was considered a source of Muslim decline and the problems associated with it As a result, Islam, not nationalism or some other ideology or concept imported from the West was regarded as the solution to the problems of the modern Muslim world But, at the same time, when almost half the world seems to be gripped with Islamophobia, it is necessary to understand who benefits from the ideologies of fundamentalism? While, on the one hand, Islamic fundamentalism is used to justify American imperialism in the Middle East, on the other, Islamic fundamentalism has used the position of women in Islamic society, especially the representation of prominent Muslim women, as a powerful strategy for indoctrinating women to accept their subordination, as pointed out by Nayyar S Javed Similar views on hegemonic masculinity are voiced by Murry Knuttila who argues that men in patriarchal society benefit from its social structures, relations and practices

The term 'fundamentalism' – which, in fact, encourages 'fixed identities' where 'slippages are suppressed' and 'sameness is prized' – has been expanded by the ten authors of this book to include areas such as market economics and hegemonic masculinity, with the commonality that can be described as feminist, anti-racist and anti-oppressive In addition to the above mentioned types of fundamentalisms, the other forms such as Jewish fundamentalism, aboriginal fundamentalism, nationalism fundamentalism have been discussed, including market fundamentalism explained by Don Mitchell, who is of the opinion that 'people have begun to recognise that unregulated free-market route to prosperity is a myth for all but the wealthy few' He further argues that some of the frustration around market fundamentalism is directed at the corporate mass media who are self-absorbed and uncritical of the damage

being done to people This is like voicing the views of Jean Baudrillard who has blamed the mass media for creating 'hyper-reality' which is constructed of simulacra – images which only get their meaning from other images and, therefore, they have no basis in an 'external reality' Same seems to be the problem with 'fundamentalism' which is seen in relation to others – us/them, insider/outsider and other infinite binary absolutes, or to say, 'we cannot be otherwise'

Although this book is a welcome relief from only one definition of fundamentalism – that of Islamic, I still feel, that it seems as if the whole book, or the major portion of it, is written in relation to the United States of America I would like to suggest that instead of using the terms 'American fundamentalism' and 'Islamic fundamentalism', why not call it 'Bush fundamentalism' and 'Muslim fundamentalism', not forgetting thousands of Americans protesting against the policies of President Bush, with a number of Hollywood movies also joining in In the same vein, it is better to do away with the term Islamic fundamentalism If, being a Sikh, I misinterpret and misuse my religion, it does not make Sikhism a bad religion Same goes for Islam

The point is that we should avoid 'bracketisation' When we contextualise, categorise or generalise, we are reducing ourselves to being a fundamentalist When Sigmund Freud says, 'America is a big mistake' and Ronald Reagan speaks of the Soviet Union as 'the Evil Empire', we are, in fact, encountering two fundamentalists When one claims to be a 'non-fundamentalist' is it not being equivalent to a fundamentalism? 'I am a Gandhian', 'I am a Marxist' – these confinements of thoughts imprison you and make you a fundamentalist One should always be open – open to ideas, open to change always be an *Alpha* (the starting), not the *Omega* (the end)

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Cecilia Ng and Swasti Mitter (eds.): *Gender and the digital economy Perspectives from the developing world* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2005, 261 pp , Price not mentioned (hb) ISBN 0-7619-3410-3

If 'Globalisation' catches the frequent attention of the scholars and intellectuals in current academics, both as a concept and a process, the growth of 'Information Communication Technology' (ICT) demands greater attention as the determinant of social dynamism 'Gender' as a dimension cuts across nation, state and region in all aspects of develop-

ment The volume under review is the systematic figurisation of the deep insights and motivating ideas of globally reputed intellectuals and developmentalists on problems and prospects of ICT for women in the developing world

The anthology is divided into three sections covering nine chapters, excluding the editorial introduction The introductory chapter outlines the main ideas discussed by the contributors in the subsequent chapters

Inaugurating the central theme, Swasti Mitter explains the prospects of ICT and the difference it makes in the lives of poor women of the peripheral nations Hers is a critique of the prevalent conviction that access to networking technologies is an empowering tool for the women of the poorer countries She argues that the concept of universalism regarding the priorities and aspirations of women is questionable and needs to be examined Adopting a feminist perspective, she concludes that scholars must empathise with women of poorer countries in order to draw conclusions on their ideas and expectations from ICTs She apprehends. silencing their voices poses a threat to peace, stability and sustainability in development

Martha Roldan establishes that the introduction of ICT within the context of regional globalisation strengthens the vulnerability of the non-core workers of whom women form a large part The evolution of an 'Informational World Economy' along with the process of globalisation has very often had negative consequences like violation of human rights negating development Her effort to put the information/knowledge-based development framework in the ambit of feminist agenda is sensible Czarina Saloma discusses the status of women IT workers in Philippines and believes in the liberating capacity of IT through the creation of female spaces in the industry Ng and Mitter directly reflect the voices of women call-centre employees both in India and Malaysia which indicate the trends of both empowerment and exploitation Their objective is to find out whether inflexibilisation and informalisation of female labour are still being followed in the new economy as characterised by traditional labour

The analysis of Govind Kelkar, Girija Shrestha and Veena N echo an optimistic trend of women's strength and power In their opinion, women's entry in to the IT jobs is a definite march towards autonomy and decision-making power They believe in the organised strength of women and advance the idea of 'Women's Agency' which is conceived to be a common platform of women's interaction acting towards homo-genisation of their situations in order to fight out and confront with problems for improving the quality and style of life

Isabel Zorn suggests the novel idea of 'Virtual Community', which is not location specific but based on subjective space created out of shared interests and communication among the people Women can be effective participants in the development of 'Global Information Society' through the formation of 'Virtual International Community' Nevertheless, Zorn raises her apprehension that the new community often invites an elitist bias, catering to the economic interests of groups of men and women already privileged The idea of 'Gender Net' as a new communication technology is innovated by Dora Ines Munevar and Juan Aburto Arrieta in order to challenge the 'Digital Divide' and bring about social change

The central theme of the volume is developed through a set of interrogations that stimulate academic queries

A Does 'gender' create a more important and stronger variable than 'local', 'national' and 'regional' in the already created 'digital divide' in the economic system of information and communication?
B Do the ICTs facilitate women's empowerment and give a new impetus to the process of development?
C Through access to ICTs do the women take part in the process of information building and avail the benefits?
D Do the ICTs come to the rescue of women in poor peripheral countries?
E Inspite of opportunities, are women liberated from the patriarchal controls prevalent in the old economy?

The book pioneers ideas, concepts, issues and areas of research The volume is a triangular engagement with some propositions, some interrogations and some apprehensions on women's role and participation, opportunities and privileges in the new Information Economy The new concepts generated by the authors – 'Cultural Schizophrenia', 'Gender Net', 'Virtual Community', 'Informational Capitalism', and 'Virtuous Circle' – create a orientation among readers towards 'Digital Economy' The anthology is an eye opener as it induces and motivates scholars to embark on further investigation of the conditions and issues of women vis-à-vis ICT

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Chen Shao-Ming, Nader El-Bizri, Leo Marx, Jean-Bernard Ouédraogo, Vinay Kumar Srivastava and Pierre Zaoui: *Keywords Nature* New Delhi Vistar, 2005, xii + 187, Rs 195 (pb) ISBN 81-7829-617-9

The book under review is a part of the series *Keywords* (edited by Nadia Tazi), which has taken up some interesting socio-philosophical themes/

issues to address such as 'experience', 'gender', 'identity', 'nature' and 'truth' The instant volume is on the keyword 'nature', it comprises six articles on the theme from six different regions Africa, America, the Arab World, China, Europe and India It is aimed to produce an inter-cultural dialogue and an exploration of globalisation with local perspectives

The book is clearly focused on its theme, in which the authors analyse 'nature' in their local framework The local examples and illustrations make the book interesting and valuable Jean-Bernard Ouédraogo's 'Africa Human Nature as Historical Process' describes the human mind and its confrontations with the external reality, and the universe of natural elements and its relation to the historical reality It further discusses struggles between the indigenous ecosystem of Africa and the political economy of colonialism resulting in the formation of the anti-local-people ecosystem that channelled out the local forest and agriculture produce to the markets of the West Leo Marx's 'The Idea of Nature in America' differentiates between the 'first nature' (non-human world existing before the evolution of Homo sapiens) and the 'second nature' (the environment created by superimposition upon the first nature) The chapter also mentions the confrontation between the original inhabitants and the colonisers, and their respective notions of the environment Nader El-Bizri's article 'The Conceptions of Nature in Arabic Thoughts' refers to Arabic classics distinguishing between 'creative nature' (the physics perspective) and 'created nature' (the theological perspective) Chen Shao-Ming's article on the notion of nature (*Zi Ram*) describes that the idea of *Zi Ram* comes from the interpretation of communism in the Chinese cultural context 'Fables of Nature' by Pierre Zaoui shows that the meaning of nature is relative and particular to a culture Vinay Kumar Srivastava's article, 'On the Concept of Nature', quotes religious epics to locate and define the Indian notion of nature He shows the opposition between nature and culture, and refers to the traditional participation of communities in sustaining nature

Overall, the book is well organised and the essays are lucidly written It will interest social scientists as well as the general readers who wish to know about the notion of nature/environment/ecology in different cultures of the world

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Geoffrey A. Oddie: *Imagined Hinduism British Protestant missionary constructions of Hinduism, 1793-1900* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2006, 374 pp , Rs 450 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3487-1

The author uses a wide variety of sources from Christian missions to reconstruct a picture of Hinduism as the missionaries reported it His efforts are based on travellers' accounts [from both Protestant and Catholic travellers], library issue records, journals, mission records and much more The primary database that he uses comes from the Protestant missionaries who began to arrive in India in the late 18th century Filled with certainty, desirous of changing the world, they gained a lot of support from the fact that this was also the time when the British Empire was being manned by those who had a particular predilection to Protestant evangelical thinking

The missionaries who came to India were from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and differed from each other in the kind of ideas they held Yet there were certain commonalities among them They all believed in the superiority of their religion and political position in India They had antipathy to idol worship They strongly disapproved of the public display of sex and sexuality They all had a predisposition to respecting science and positivist rationality And their piety was strongly influenced by democratic and republican sentiments

Hinduism, the missionaries presumed, was the main religion of the people of India Caste, idol worship, openness towards sex and sexuality, belief in magic and seemingly irrational traditions were easily identified by them as the core components of Hinduism The central ideas of Hinduism, however, were somewhat more difficult to identify since that required a debate with texts written in Sanskrit, a language with which not many were familiar Even more difficult to identify was the practise of Hinduism since there seemed to be so many variations from region to region and from text to text Yet, the missionaries went ahead to construct a universal image of Hinduism

Much of the compulsion to describe and formalise Hinduism came from the practise of training people for mission work in India Much of the training would involve learning local languages, but inevitably some of it would also include discussions on the nature of Hinduism But there would be very little effort to sensitise the mission candidates to the nature of local society, its beliefs and practises The officials of the government, often desirous of helping missionary activities, found such ignorance on the part of the missionaries galling But there is something about holding to certainties that prevented the missionaries from

modulating their ideas about India and Hinduism on the basis of more accurate knowledge about India and her religions

In the end, then, despite the large body of information being generated by civilians and members of various learned societies, the missionaries by and large continued to hold on to their own peculiar and dismissive notions of Hinduism Much of it was coloured through the missionaries contact with pundits who were hired to teach them local languages and practises The pundit ended up being tagged as the quintessential Hindu No wonder that the author uses the term 'imagined' to describe the missionary knowledge about Hinduism 'imagined' in the sense of being fanciful, without any basis in reality

As the 19th century changed into the 20th, the spread of missionaries reached far and wide into the countryside Inevitably they came across different versions of Hinduism Their democratic beliefs also impelled them to teach similar values of freedom and equality to the Indians with whom they came in contact That resulted in a variety of reform movements within Indian society It also resulted in Hindus beginning to judge themselves as a unified religion, much in the manner of Islam or Christianity 'Hindu religion in the form of the one all-embracing unified Brahman- controlled system is not clearly apparent in the pre-modern period', says the author It was by self-reflexion, he argues, through the foil of ideas on religion provided by the Protestant missionaries that even Indians began to identify Hinduism as a unified belief system In the event, it was the early reformers like Raja Rammohun Roy who, while arguing with Christian beliefs, began to give shape to Hinduism This is a bold statement to make and the author makes it on the basis of a meticulous historical enquiry into the discourses of Christian missionaries

The relationship between the missionaries and empire was not an easy one Each sought to use the other just as much each differed from the basic ideas espoused by the other Yet, in their complex inter-mingling lay the seeds of ideas of modern freedom on which the Indians built their freedom movement The author recreates that world in fine detail

If there is a bone to pick with the author it is just this the Christian imagination of Hinduism was not limited to the Protestants and missionaries There was a large Christian presence in South India for over 1,000 years before the Protestant missionaries arrived Here the imbrications between the Christians and others were far more complex One would have loved to learn a little bit about that interaction as well and how it informed the perception of Hinduism among the missionaries

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Govinda Chandra Rath (ed.): *Tribal development in India The contemporary debate* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2006, 340 pp , Rs 450 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3423-5

The theme of this book is not novel, but it touches upon some of the contemporary issues confronting the tribal communities like land alienation, displacement, resistance movements, and starvation deaths Their continuous struggle over these issues reflects the relevance and importance of looking at tribal development from different perspectives to search for an effective strategy to resolve the crisis

This book is a collection of thirteen research papers divided into four parts, with an introduction by the editor The first part deals with different development approaches and programmes, and provides a critical view of the tribal development planning The second part deals with tribal autonomy movements and the issues of development The third part deals with the struggle of tribal people to regain their rights to resources The last part talks about tribal education, health and the development programmes, process and issues of Car Nicobarese tribes in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

In the introduction, Govinda Chandra Rath gives an elaborate account of different development discourses and highlights the positive and negative experiences of the welfare model of tribal development He argues that the successful implementation of this model lies in scientific management, able leadership and, above all, the capacity of the tribes to cope with new technology as well as their willingness to accept the idea He highlights how the traditional knowledge of the Kani tribe of Kerala helped to raise their economic status by commercialising their traditionally used medicine *jeevani* Though the welfare model is helping only a privileged group among the tribes, Rath's arguments show an inclination to establish its relevance despite all its drawbacks

In a separate essay, Rath contrasts the approaches of Jawaharlal Nehru and Verrier Elwin to tribal development and discusses the relevance of that debate today With enough illustrations, he effectively brings out that the Nehruvian approach could not retain its uniformity in ideology and practice Barik also contributes to this argument in his paper on the tribal people of Koraput district in Orissa However, Elwin's strong isolationist approach and claims of an anti-modern tribal identity needs to be more critically analysed, because tribal people are competent in scientific outlook and in developing technological skills for their progress Rath points out that, through the National Park approach, Elwin wanted to keep the tribes in isolation, but today they themselves are claiming their isolation through ethnic assertion In my opinion, they are not

claiming their isolation but asserting their identity, dignity and political sovereignty through ethnic movements

Sajal Basu examines the continuous struggle for resources by the tribals in Jharkhand and the emerging challenges of the new state of Jharkhand, mainly in relation to the better utilisation of the existing resources for the welfare of the tribal people The proposal of an 'ethno development model', in which local resources are controlled by the ethnic group which uses indigenous techniques to promote development, is refreshing Basu expresses disappointment about the new state's failure to mobilise the spirit of positive ethnicity, to tackle displacement issues and to protect tribal culture and identity Sarkar discusses the political autonomy of tribal communities in his study of the Kamatapur movement of the Rajbanshi tribe in North Bengal

Chathukulam and John present land alienation as the key issue in tribal development by analysing the Wayanad situation in Kerala Paternalistic notion of development and its welfare programmes are criticised The adivasi agitation led by Janu that demanded compensatory land against alienated tribal land is acknowledged as a successful democratic agitation Suggesting the application of PESA (Panchayats Extension to the Scheduled Areas Act, 1996) as a remedy to address political alienation and future land alienation is not viable as legal loopholes in the Act allow state sponsored tribal land alienation for mining, dams and industry in the name of 'public interest' without the consent of tribal communities

Kripa Shankar criticises the various schemes for tribal development for their lack of consideration of the most important means to tribal livelihood, namely, the provision of land Arun Kumar introduces the tribal struggle for property rights in West Godavari district The active role of the NGO, SAKTHI (Strength for Action Knowledge for Tribal Initiation) in creating awareness of protective legislation and in the resolution of land disputes through court verdicts is inspirational

Walter Fernandes examines the status of tribal women in terms of gender roles and rights and duties in the context of development-induced displacement Tribal woman's relatively high status is attributed to her access to abundance of resources and the economic support she gives to her family However, when common resources are used for development projects and when displacement takes place, she loses her status in the family When land for land is given as compensation, it is only in the name of man Other factors like threat to her privacy, lack of opportunities for socialisation, high-caste influence and men's drunkenness are also analysed to give a more holistic picture

In the paper on Bhotias, Sahai *et al* narrate the involvement of government and non-governmental agencies in tribal development Local

needs and traditional occupations are neglected in planning, even though an increase in educational facilities has helped to develop leadership and other job opportunities Sahoo and Das give a more general picture of tribal education and valuable suggestions for its improvement Tribal health is also discussed giving priority to economic and bio-medical issues However, instead of the sectoral approach adopted by the authors, a more structural analysis of issues like land alienation and political participation would have helped to address the health issues of tribals today

This book is rich with secondary data from government sources and NGOs and primary data collected through field surveys, focus group discussions and interviews with key informants It is a useful book for scholars working on tribal development

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Jaspal Singh: *Sociology of organisation Strategy for removing poverty* New Delhi Kanishka Publishers, 2006, xxv + 250 pp, Rs 595 (hb) ISBN 81-7391-837-6

Mind the caption In fact, it could not be better than this if the theory of entitlement and exchange was institutionally considered universalistic and rational Organisation has become indispensable in modern society to achieve productivity, quality, egalitarianism or any kind of change Everything hinges upon organisation The concept of organisation has been changing from the dominant social to business connotation, with a preference for 'formal' over 'informal' The relationship between the state and NGOs needs to be studied along with the ambiguity of dichotomy of religious and secular aspects and its bearing upon the personality system

The term organisation has been used in this book mainly in the sense of 'structure' (parts and functions and stable interaction) Emile Durkheim and Max Weber's formulations have succinctly been used Jacques Derrida's method of deconstruction seems to be implicit in the analysis, particularly when reflexive sociology (understanding an issue or event synchronically and diachronically by encoding and decoding) is done Mertonian binary notions such as intended and unintended, self-fulfilling and self-denying prophecies have been used

The unique trait of the people of any society can be established only analytically because of the ongoing process of universalisation, now in

the form of globalisation with a higher qualitative and quantitative order The context of globalisation and communication has been accepted in the realm of sociology of organisation 'Globalisation is not a panacea It solves some problems, and creates many more' (p 175) The author's boredom with the pre-organisational society is, however, not congruent with the conceptual categories like *tapasya, raj-dharma, karma, riddhi-siddhi,* etc The real 'debate' and 'dilemma' is over *moksha* and money!

Knowledge and communication are elemental prerequisites for the development of organisation and society All organisational (both formal and informal) theories should be juxtaposed with the theory of actor, knowledge and communication In this complex and information-rich society, the key to organisational excellence is effective communication Communication systems within organisations, both human and technological, are capable of solving increasingly complex problems

Organisational excellence emanates from the dedicated commitment of people who are motivated to work together and share similar values and visions about the results of their efforts In fact, many scholars have gone as far as to suggest that organisations are essentially complex communication process that create and change events For all societies of the past, and the information and knowledge societies of today and tomorrow, there is consensus about the centrality of organisational communication At all organisational levels, competent communicators are needed With more complex decisions, rapid change, more information, and less certainty about what the decisions should be, excellence in the information society depends on the abilities, commitment and creativity of organisational members

In recent years, organisational analysis has shown rigid boundaries to be increasingly dysfunctional Boundary-less organisations do not, however, just happen They require deliberate changes in structure and process, actively driven by leaders who ignite the sparks of transformation, and then control the flames to make the transformation productive

Primarily, the book is a study of the society in India keeping organisation as the central variable In another sense, it is a study of methodology and theory construction of organisation and society The book's thematic paradigm is close to an innovative New Sociology

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Navnita Chadha Behera (ed.): *Gender, conflict and migration* (Women and migration in Asia, Vol 3) New Delhi Sage Publications, 2006, 310 pp , Rs 395 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3455-3

This volume attempts to break through the homogenous 'victimhood' image presented in the dominant discourse on women migrants affected by war and conflict, and seeks to explore the space for women's agency in these situations It simultaneously highlights the suffering that women are subjected to in a conflict situation and the survival strategies adopted by them

Research on the subject of women's migration and conflict is generally organised along the twin axes of gender and conflict, and gender and migration The reality of women's conflict-driven migration, however, falls between these two axes The essays in the this volume seek to fill this gap by examining the changes in status, identities and power relations among women and men as they move from a conflict situation at home, to migrant camps, to the post-conflict or peace-building phase when they return home

In all, this volume contains eleven articles, including the editorial introduction In her introduction to the series, Meenakshi Thapan notes that the present volume emerged within the framework to publish the five volumes on aspects of 'Women and Migration in Asia' The present volume tries to investigate the nuances and complexities entailed in the process of migration and how it impacts the lives and identities of the individual migrants in a world which in constant flux and movement

The volume categorically focuses on gender as a category in the migration process It analyses the differential experiences of women and men in the context of a gendered world The contributors discuss issues like choice and coercion in most conflict-related migration, division between the private sphere of women and the public sphere of men after such migration, women's demand for meaningful political participation, 'subaltern' and marginalised conceptualisations of conflict affected migrant women, relationship between the state, citizenship and national honour on the one hand, and women on the other, during and after conflict, and national and regional 'gender asylum laws' The volume provides key insights to the understanding of these issues in specific conflict situations throughout South Asia

In her introduction, Navnita Chadha Behera explains terms like gender, conflict and migration She tries to explore new thematic and theoretical connections between gender, conflict and migration Nayanika Mookherjee highlights the heterogeneity of migrant experiences as a result of war, particularly, that of the middle-class refugees This allows

juxtaposition and encounters between various refugee subjectivities in contemporary Bangladesh Furrukh A Khan's paper presents the Pakistani experiences of meta-narratives documented by state

Saba Gul Khattak points out that the word for country and home – *watan* – is used interchangeably She interprets home as a positive locus of identity for women, rather than uncritically considering home to be primarily the first-site of oppression for women as in the feminist position Urvashi Butalia explains conflict-driven migration with reference to the partition of India during 1947 She underlines the shifting notion of 'home' for migrant Hindus, who seek naturalisation and citizenship of the 'host country', that is India Anasua Basu Raychaudhury also talks about the migration process during the partition period

Darini Rajasingham-Senanayake points out that in the north and east of Sri Lanka, the reality of war for women has been the loss of their men folk, physical safety, psychological insecurity and a struggle for survival and sustaining the family Rita Manchanda questions the utility of determining voluntary and coercive reasons for explaining the complex web of factors that underlie migration By using a gender perspective, Manchanda introduces a third category of those who are 'internally struck' and are often the most vulnerable

Mary O'Kane discusses in detail how women began to challenge the established norms of gender relations in response to new and different situations faced in the Burma-Thailand borderlands Oishik Sircar stresses upon the need for advancing alternative asylum jurisprudence in South Asia to challenge and counter the existing constructs of the Eastern-native-disempowered- women applying for asylum in the developed countries Anthony Good contests feminist critics for assuming that women are discriminated against in asylum decision-making and argues that the reality seems more complex

The theoretical foundation of this book comes from the sociology of migration, gender, and conflict The different authors in the book claim that sociology of migration no longer denotes the static notion, but highlights in terms of the cyclical character of most 'conflict' and 'peace' situations, the phenomenon of 'internally displaced persons' and, to some extent, forced migrants as well Rejecting the meta-narrative reductionism of much of postmodern theory, the sociology of migration looks at concrete narratives that actors construct to give coherence in a world undergoing deinstitutionalisation and de-socialisation

The volume seeks to contribute to the literature on migration Contributors in this volume have employed a variety of feminist research methods including ethnographic research, in-depth interviews, dialogue, oral history, textual analyses, consciousness-raising techniques (that is,

role-playing), and establishment of networks and communications Many authors attempt to let the informants speak for themselves through the transcripts of group session in which various social logics are the topics of discussion

The relevance of the volume lies in its description of migration and conflict processes and how these affect the lives of women These constraints range from structural to cultural to psychological The volume will not only appeal to sociologists who prefer subjectivist epistemologies but also to scholars of migration studies, gender studies, peace and conflict studies, human rights, political science, and to social activists and the policy makers involved in shaping refugee laws and managing humanitarian aid to refugees

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Paramjit S. Judge: *Religion, identity and nationhood* Jaipur and New Delhi Rawat Publications, 2005, ix + 277 pp , Rs 550 (hb) ISBN 81-7033-949-9

The Khalistan movement in Punjab, militant and secessionist in its agenda, spanned over a decade and half (1978-1993), involving killings by the militant organisations having allegiance to it, and culminated into what is called the Punjab crisis The crisis of the kind and magnitude suffered by Punjab required in-depth objective examination, and Paramjit S Judge's instant work meets the rigours of such an examination, both theoretically and methodologically

The book explores the relationship between religion, identity and nationhood in the framework of sociology of social and political movements It develops a critique, and discusses at length the conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues pertaining to ideology, an integral and significant component in any social and political movement The structuring of the latter takes place under specific structural conditions Its dynamics has considerable bearing on the society, mode of thought and the structural processes The analysis highlights the theoretical and methodological intricacies of the movement under study and reveals the dialectical relationship between social structure and ideology

The theoretical orientation of the book derives its base, among others, from Jean-François Lyotard's knowledge framework 'structure of narratives' and makes use of his three categories, namely, sender, referent and addressee These are highly significant in understanding

both the ideological grounding of the militant movement and its public expression and the operational mode The analysis shows that the latter is nothing less than planning a military war strategy with victory as the ultimate aim

The book, while giving accounts of the militancy, also goes into its strategies and tactics and provides a methodological and theoretical framework for understanding the phenomenon of militancy The discussions in different chapters, most specifically pertaining to the historical evolution of the Sikh identity and the question of Sikhs as a nation, make the book, to a certain extent region-specific, but certainly of interest for scholars across cross sections of academia and the people at large While elaborating Sikh and Sikhism as an identity the author attributes both to the socio-historical and political processes of 19th century Punjab, and to the twentieth century political events giving rise to the Bhindranwale phenomenon, surrounding the Sikh religious leader Jarnail Singh Bhindrawale who spearheaded the most volatile Khalistan movement of 20th century Punjab

Along with the rise of Sikh identity, the issue of demand for separate nationhood raised by the protagonists of Khalistan movement in 20th century Punjab is also examined by the author in the light of religious roots of Indian nationalism and Hindu fundamentalism The rise of Sikh nationhood is examined in comparison to similar instances in which the Hindu bourgeoisie managed its political space through religious assertions from time-to-time The author has devoted considerable space to the construction of religious nationhood in the Sikh militant discourse in the light of communal politics of Punjab since the 19th century

The militancy in Punjab, according to the author, in the process of articulating religious identity and construction of religious nationhood also invariably discursively and consistently subsumes the presence of the other Referring to Veena Das' 'positive self' and 'negative other', the author observes that such a construction is consciously carried out with two objectives First, to create a distinction between the self and the other, and the second, to create an image of the other as the one who has done considerable damage to the self Bhindrawale not only emphasised the distinction between the Sikhs and the Hindus, but also cited historical instances and his own constructions of Hindu image to describe the Hindu as enemy of the Sikh In his speeches, he attacked Brahmanism and eulogised the sacrifices of the Sikh Gurus The book follows interpretive approach in examining the speeches delivered by Bhindrawale from time to time in the construction of culture, tradition and history of the Sikhs, rationalisation of militancy in the Sikh culture and traditions, in the creation of binaries in the form of self and others

Apart from the legitimisation of killings by the militants, the protagonist of the movement described the militants killed as Sikh heroes, who sacrificed their life for the cause of Khalistan in line with the Sikh traditions It is argued that martyrdom as a part of religious tradition becomes a powerful ideological force in which the martyr becomes the symbol of sacrifice and sometimes gets identified with what religion means It is worthwhile to mention here that even when a movement is characterised by violence, hard core terrorism and secessionism, its tactics and strategies are both hard and soft in nature While the negative imaging of the movement remained the state agenda, the militants also resorted to social reforms with the objective creating a moral community The messages in the form of warnings were sent to the people to mend their actions or face the consequences What is significant here is the fact that the book gives a sociological touch to the concept of warnings and, through content analysis of the published warnings, it traces their origin, mode of presentation and the process of legitimisation The author also points out the immoral dimensions of the movement, especially extortion, exploitation, rapes of young girls and other offences committed by the rank and file of the movement, which became a cause of its declining influence on the masses in the rural areas Besides being based on facts and sound theoretical and methodological premises, the book makes for interesting scholarly reading

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Patricia Uberoi: *Freedom and destiny Gender, family and popular culture in India* New Delhi Oxford University Press, 2006, xix + 309 pp , Rs 695 (hb) ISBN 0-19-567991-1

Family and marriage, two classical themes in sociology of India, have enjoyed more than their share of space in sociological journals as well as other scholarly publications in India during the past three decades Indeed, Patricia Uberoi herself has produced a large body of work on the subject Gender, too, has lately witnessed a similar privileging, be it in isolation or in conjunction with other subjects within the panorama of social sciences Another addition on the subject, therefore, ought not to be an occasion to be excited over However, the volume under review cannot be dismissed simply as another addition to the exceedingly humdrum feminist accounts already doing the rounds in academy and polity

There are a variety of reasons which command a serious look at this book, the most compelling being the freshness it offers through its innovative exploration of popular culture as a resource for unveiling the paradox of individual freedom and normative expectations in the Indian ethos By doing so, it transcends the textual and empirical limits of the prevalent literature and thresholds into a largely un-trodden arena of the popular to deconstruct the classicism of the dominant great tradition The book encompasses the attempts to reveal the hybridised merging of the oppositional categories of sacred/secular, lineal/conjugal, dharma/desire, acquiescence/resistance, self/other, etc in the three different kinds of mass media

Uberoi undoubtedly displays the finesse and sophistication which one can expect from someone writing on home ground, so to speak Excepting the introduction, all the seven essays have been previously published in various books and journals during the past decade Yet, the reader does not get a sense of their being outdated or disjointed Contrarily, the essays reflect a thematic unity in both form and content Uberoi's thickly woven narratives lend a poignant vibrancy to the three popular media she has used, namely, calendar art, Hindi cinema and the romantic stories featured in women's era With utmost ease she drives home her point with her judicious selection of calendars, films and short stories

In chapter two, she draws on critical analysis of calendar art to construct the portrait of Indian womanhood and its place in the Nehruvian nationalist agenda Citing research works from feminine history, cultural nationalism, history of fine arts and cultural studies, she brings out the semiotic interplay between the categories of woman as a goddess and as a pin-up, as a wife and a whore Mirabai is, therefore, abandoned and overtly sensuous, and Yashoda is demure because she is primarily a mother Calendar art acts as an active vehicle for transmission of the simultaneity of tradition and nation, as Uberoi puts it The goddess Laxmi signifies national prosperity through signs such as industrialisation and Green Revolution

The plurality of representation that the author reads in the visuals chosen, is difficult to establish, though Several of the images that the author has cited as instances of alternatives to the routine projection of women as 'victims' are, in a sense, open to a similar interpretation Conjugal bonding does not necessarily symbolise freedom, as Uberoi herself has found out in her analysis of agony aunt columns advising compromise or 'adjustment' Similarly, *rakhi* is again symbolic of a woman seeking protection, hardly an alternative to subversive themes

Chapter three demonstrates a similar conjoining of the divine and the mortal, of tradition and modernity in the pictures of exclusively male babies featured as child gods and future engineers, soldiers or the symbols of familial as well as national prosperity The paradox is evident in the conspicuous absence of the female child (dress code suggests male babies) in these calendars It persists in the celebration of patriliny and patriarchy alongside vigorous industrialisation and modernisation The author has credibly documented the much needed historic dimension on the subject Calendar art, however, has its limitations in an era when television soaps, music videos, advertisements and internet are the sites of current national imaginary

The theme of paradoxical occurrence, in practice, of supposedly contravening categories prevails faithfully in the subsequent essays on commercial bollywood Dharma and desire, therefore, come face to face in the three film narratives The analysis of *Sahib, bibi aur ghulam* does justice to the directorial attempt to capture the tensions of gender and subaltern resistance in the backdrop of dying feudalism and newly born nationalism The other three films chosen by the author show the merging of material and spiritual in the sphere of Indian marriage and family life The essays reveal the centrality of individual sacrifice and familial obligation, the privileging of national over foreign and duty over desire in the popular construction of Indian-ness.

The surprise of the book is the inclusion of romance and courtship, the two otherwise neglected themes in the literature on Indian marriage and family Uberoi looks at the popular fiction as a medium which has been according space to 'subversive' women's voices by featuring stories of pre- and post-marital romance The stories, however, are patronising of women's liberation and they reinforce compromise as a guide to marital happiness Sadly, this section of the book lacks the rigour and intensity which comes across so tangibly in the rest of the book For example, the last chapter with its slim eight notes stands particularly dwarfed in comparison to the well-researched initial chapters with thick notes numbering more than eighty The theme of blurring boundaries of categories which is the methodological hallmark of the book also gets blurred in these chapters

Overall, the book is well researched with a useful bibliography and attractive and rare visuals, and it explores gendered relations from a fresh perspective of popular culture It reflects a beautiful permeation of academic literature, personal experience and commitment

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Phoebe S. Liebig and S. Irudaya Rajan (eds.): *An aging India Perspectives, prospects and policies* Jaipur Rawat Publications, 2005, 248 pp , Rs 525 (hb) ISBN 81-7033-957-X

The book under review, an Indian reprint of articles published in the *Journal of Ageing and Social Policy,* engages the reader to ageing dimensions in India with a promise of comparisons with other countries, especially the USA However, except for the first two articles, the contributions are limited in throwing comparative light on aspects of ageing in other countries Nonetheless, the book gains by highlighting the specificities of ageing in India from different perspectives – demographic, social, economic, health, policy and NGO It covers current policy trends and makes some recommendations The articles are well organised, based on issues and topics they address These are divided into six categories Introduction, Foundations of Ageing in India, Economics, Health, and Social, Networks, Social and Familial Relations, Current Interventions, and Advocacy and Policy

Using the 1991 Census data, some interesting insights are provided of the social and economic characteristics of the aging population The emerging aging scenario of India, the country with the second largest population of older people, is depicted in terms of six major regions south, west, central, east, north and northeast The projections for the first half of the 21st century are the highlights of the book, and it is assuring that they are close to data revealed by the latest Census report Of special concern is the fact that India is part of the minority group of countries where males outnumber females, but at age 60 and above, the female life-expectancy is slightly higher than for males The implications of this, combined with the phenomenon of there being more widows than widowers in the country, calls for urgent action to improve the quality of life of older people from a gender perspective, especially taking into account the vulnerability of women and the disadvantage they face in many ways

The book lays emphasis on the deteriorating living conditions of older people, and while these are correlated with the fast eroding traditional family system in the wake of rapid modernisation, migration and urbanisation, there is no hard core data provided as evidence It would have been useful to have, for instance, a chapter on ageing and migration or urbanisation to reflect the impact of employment and adult children leaving their parents behind to seek greener pastures Information on level of literacy, martial status, work status, social security, family and support networks, health, disability, elder abuse and their analysis done by respective authors would enlighten readers and

provoke further research besides informing policy makers about the needs of older people A crucial issue that emerges concerns the remedial measures for making older persons real assets rather than being considered liabilities The well-being of older people is intimately linked with the life-long learning and it is important that, for the future cohorts of older people, education programs are developed for their greater adaptability to changing socioeconomic conditions

For an ageing India, given the lack of any widespread social insurance mechanisms as portrayed in the comprehensive overview of income security policy of organised sector, unorganised sector, civil services and non civil services employees, the recommendation for greater attention to the social security needs of the rural elderly merits consideration since a large majority of older people reside in villages It is, no doubt, a daunting task to provide for economic security to a rapidly growing section of population referred to as old after crossing age 60 But it is an important policy matter which the government can no longer overlook Maybe the new pension reforms started in the country will bring relief

The 'double disease burden' of the country is lucidly described in the article on health status of elders As there are no separate health care services for the elderly in India, chronic ailments related to age and life-style need further focus in the health policy of the country The article on disability adds to the strength of the book and it also touches on gender issues vis-à-vis mental health concerns The article on support networks brings a much needed emphasis on encouraging 'the creation and maintenance of robust social networks of older persons' The controversial issue of elder abuse is touched with sensitivity and strategies suggested to tackle the problem would be received well by readers

A valuable contribution of the book is a review of interventions in health, housing, and social services It opens the reader to initiatives taken by individuals and institutions, and raises the question of whether there should be a private-public mix in providing services to older people In partnership with the civil society the scope of having a multi-dimensional and multisectorial approach towards the well-being of older persons has great potential In this context, documentation of the contribution made by an NGO in promoting the interests of older people and meeting their needs is welcome and so is the analysis of grass-roots organisations, namely, pensioners associations and senior citizens forums Also, the discussion on old age homes brings contemporary concerns to the forefront An ageing society of a developing nation undergoing social, demographic and epidemiological transformations needs a

sensitive policy response and the article on policy development reflects on past and current trends

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Ronnie Vernooy (ed.): *Social and gender analysis in natural resource management Learning studies and lessons from Asia* New Delhi Sage Publications and Ottawa International Development Research Centre, 2006, 250 pp , Rs 280 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3463-4

Ronnie Vernooy's anthology has come on the shelf at a time when the whole world is debating the complex issues of environment, ecology and sustainability Consisting of three synthetic chapters and six case studies, the 'Learning Studies' as Vernooy calls them, the volume attempts to document the interface between natural and social sciences, descriptive and participatory forms of research, and local 'projects' and wider socio-economic and socio-political structures/processes The learning studies make an effort to integrate the social and gender analysis (SAGA) in natural resource management (NRM), and problematise the harsh realities of five Asian countries, namely, India, Nepal, China, Vietnam and Mongolia The SAGA perspective examines the notions of gender, class, caste, ethnicity and age, which are part of social relations and decision-making processes relating to access, use and management of natural resources

The Asian countries under reference represent multifarious cultures, languages, and local and supra-local forces The SAGA has utilised locally developed methods, tools and techniques to gain an in-depth understanding of this cultural variegation The six case studies focus on the socio-political, socioeconomic and socio-cultural aspects of NRM Each study has developed its own methodological tools and techniques in order to address its research questions and objectives

The dominant premise of SAGA is to critically examine the gender issues, namely, women's role in production and commercialisation, their decision-making power in the household, community and society, their access to resources and services, and their needs, interests and expertise in NRM In their study on the cultivation and commercialisation of ginger in Sikkim and West Bengal in India, Chanda Gurung and Nawraj Gurung highlight the high degree of socioeconomic differentiation among households where women have limited power over decision-making process and restricted access to credit, which have negative

influence on their capacity to improve production Likewise, the paper by Vengota Nakro and Chozhule Kikhi examines the reasons for the invisibility of women despite their economic contribution Nakro and Kikhi argue that though the Nagaland women make significant contribution to the market economy, they are not considered as economic agents in the state

Irrespective of the contribution and commitment of women, the state often remains indifferent to their concerns It neither initiates women-friendly technological innovations and dissemination nor does it acknowledge the knowledge and skills of women As Deepa Singh, Anil Subedi and Pitamber Shrestha note, the social life of the rural folk of Nepal is greatly influenced by the state-supported technology development, which is gender blind as well as biased towards the rich They observe that the poor and the uneducated, especially the women, have restricted access to both traditional and modern hybrid varieties The case of China, delineated by Ronnie Vernooy and Linxiu Zhang, is similar to that of Nepal Their study reveals that, though the rural China has experienced feminisation of agriculture, there is still significant disparity between the rich and the poor In addition, despite a variety of government interventions, the ethnic minorities continue to be marginalised There is hardly any awareness, understanding and planning activities by the government, and extension and research agencies in terms of social and gender considerations

Under patriarchal domination, women's access to public information is neglected or overlooked Their work hardly gets recognition They are also alienated from the process of decision-making The experiences from Vietnam and Mongolia stand testimony to these issues Hoang Thi Sen and Le Van An report that rural women and poor farmers in Vietnam rarely receive access to information and services than men and better-off households in upland communities It is also explained that the contribution of women to agriculture in Vietnam is more than that of men, but their work rarely gets any recognition 'most government policies and programmes are gender-blind, if not on paper certainly in practice' In Mongolia, women play a central role in the management of grassland in particular and natural resources in general, but their contribution is mostly overlooked by the government/herders The process of decision-making is unequal and power imbalances exist between men and women

The SAGA perspective in Vernooy's volume attempts to highlight the social and gender issues, such as ethnicity, caste, class, gender, power etc that operate in Asian countries However, all the 'learning studies' are concerned with women, to the exclusion of other social issues They

deal with 'women in development' or 'gender and development' Hence, the title of the book is misleading All the same, with its rich empirical insights, the book depicts the harsh realties of the Asian countries

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R.S. Khare (ed.): *Caste, hierarchy, and individualism Indian critiques of Louis Dumont's contributions* (Oxford in India readings in sociology and social anthropology) New Delhi Oxford University Press, 2006, xviii + 262 pp , Rs 575 (hb) ISBN 0-19-567917-2

The status that Louis Dumont and his work enjoy in the Indian academic context is rather peculiar Dumont, even during the years of his active and somewhat messianic engagement with the project of Indian sociology, had remained an 'uncertain figure' to the Indian academia at large The few discussions that did emerge on his work were confined to the then elite establishments Uncertainty has increasingly given way to perfunctory citation ever since he 'abandoned'/'deserted' Indian studies It is a wonder then that for many currently influential scholars and ideologies he is one figure that needs a thoroughgoing debunking before any meaningful thinking about contemporary Indian life can begin Accordingly, a great deal currently written about Dumont that is interesting is marked by an unhidden impatience, and not infrequently antipathy, for his style as well as scholarship T N Madan is among the rare and consistent exceptions to this trend Yet, in recent years some strands of European scholarship are revisiting Dumont and are claiming a *general* applicability for his framework and method The publication of this volume, and as part of a textbook series, bringing together some of the most interesting 'Indian' responses to Dumont (the initiative predictably coming from Madan himself) could, therefore, be viewed as an opportunity presented before new generations of Indian scholars to revisit Dumont for a critical reappraisal and evaluate his relevance to the questions that bother them today

The book presents Dumont's interlocutors across three sections – 'Overviews and Reviews', 'Different Evaluations and Postcolonial Commentaries' – each preceded by an editorial comment and a Further Readings list The last part Dumont in his own Words contains two excerpts from Dumont himself and two interviews with him The first section contains four pieces, focussing largely on the reception that *Homo Hierarchicus* (*HH*) received in India – two from Madan (one a

summation of *HH* and the other an overview of the larger Dumontian project of civilisational comparison), and two reviews (R S Khare's open-ended stance as against Veena Das and J P S Uberoi's harsher evaluation) The second part contains eight selections – M N Srinivas's rather belated review of *HH* in the form of a public lecture, a sample of André Béteille's protracted scholarly battle with Dumont, Dipankar Gupta's innovative substantive and methodological critique of Dumont's position on caste, three pieces around Arun Bose's defence of Dumont from a Marxist vantage point and, lastly, Patricia Uberoi's assessment of Dumont's work on kinship The third part has four pieces – Partha Chatterjee's critique of synthetic theories of caste, of which he takes Dumont to be the most sophisticated representative, Arjun Appadurai's caustic obituary of the form and frame of Dumont kind of anthropology, and Veena Das's and Khare's impassioned search for a 'just' anthropological discourse, built around a critique of Dumontian project

Apart from perhaps Arun Bose's work, most of the selections are well known and routinely referred to by scholars working on caste, even if bringing them together in a volume might be welcomed especially by teachers at postgraduate departments Perhaps what then requires a comment here are the ways in which this compilation has been thought of and justified Both Madan and Khare have attempted to 'situate' the volume through their 'Foreword' and 'Introduction' respectively, and both seem to burden the volume with a task that is much more than one of being a mere compilation of scattered texts Khare has also written an interesting 'Preface' Madan desires that this volume through a representation of Dumont, if primarily through his interlocutors, renews a (sympathetic?) interest among the Indian sociologists/academics Khare though is more certain – that we are in a Dumont-and-since phase and that the discipline of anthropology/sociology in/of India is irrevocably transformed by the contemporarily urgent questions of power/knowledge and representation and, therefore, we must, well, move on

Yet, what needs urgent clarification is the question of what ought to be the terms of the professed re-engagement with Dumont, but it is precisely this that receives unsatisfactory treatment both from Madan, the sympathiser, and Khare, the critic While it would be unfair to expect Madan to take on such an onerous task through a 'Foreword', he has (even in his recent writings) remained, to cite Khare, a 'benign explicator' Khare, who, it must be admitted, makes an intense effort through his 'Introduction' to re-visit Dumont, is in the end too taken in by the enticing postcolonial turn that threatens to forever over-determine possible modes of engagement with a project of the Dumontian variety

Nonetheless, it appears that some answers for the question we posed before could still be looked for from within the volume

One interesting way perhaps is to think about the changing ways in which the interlocutors have come to approach Dumont over the years Most of the early commentators, including as unyielding a critic as Béteille, participate and share in the belief of the relevance of a common disciplinary endeavour and practice The fundamental interrogation of this belief and its ethics through an emphasis on the problematic of power is what has spawned the recent significant (but external) critiques of Dumont Indeed, the best instances of this transformation are seen in scholars who have been part of both these worlds – Khare and Das have approached Dumont from both standpoints Khare, one wished, could have used the opportunity of his 'Introduction' and sectional introductory comments to dwell on, and not merely gesture towards, this

This book is still too closely wedded to Dumont's *HH*, and the scholarship that works with his larger civilisational comparison project gets inadequate representation' Accordingly, it remains yet another reiteration of well-known positions on Dumont even as an opportunity to reflect on the probable ways in which the larger Dumontian method and model could find deployment goes waste Not limiting the volume to 'Indian' discussions might have addressed this lack partly

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Saraswati Raju, M. Satish Kumar and Stuart Corbridge (eds.): *Colonial and post-colonial geographies of India* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2006, 368 pp , Rs 695 (hb) ISBN 0-7619-3436-7

The book under review is a collection of fifteen essays on colonial and post-colonial geographies of India Of these fifteen essays, one is devoted to colonial (1652 to 1850 AD) geographies of Madras (now Chennai) town, and provides vivid pictures of manipulation of space by 'castes' and 'black and whites', while other essays focus mainly on post-colonial geographies drawing, from colonial geographies wherever needed The book deals with a range of interests which contemporary geographers in India and abroad have in India, and provide considerable insight into the way geographers are now dealing with social issues in the country

The introductory chapter provides a brief but vivid illustration of the work on the Indian subcontinent by geographers in India and abroad The

book underscores that the applied nature of research in geography in India was encouraged in the 1960s when the National Planning Commission prioritised regional planning and, among others, the Centre for the Study of Regional Development at Jawaharlal Nehru University began to engage in some of the concerns of the post-colonial state by means of applied inter-disciplinary research

The book attempts to underscore and demonstrate that the geographers are now fully conversant with broader intellectual tradition in social sciences that has helped to fuel South Asian Studies of late, and engage themselves with the work of scholars as diverse as Karl Marx, Max Weber, Michel Foucault, Henri Lefebvre and Antonio Gramsci, as well as with the contemporary public intellectuals like Amartya Sen, Veena Das, Ashish Nandy, Sudipta Kaviraj, Ramchandra Guha, Bina Agrawal, Vandana Shiva and Partha Chaterjee Although the writings of the geographers do overlap with those scholars in various other social sciences, what is distinctive to geographers is the degree of its concern for 'spatiality' and 'territoriality' Across the essays attempts are made to rediscover 'space', 'spatiality' and 'space-making', and to underscore that 'space matters' It cannot be conveniently overlooked and ignored in social interpretations It provides meanings to 'construction', and helps in construction of 'meanings' Societies exist in 'time' and 'space', so spatial dimensions are as important as temporal ones in understanding social reality In fact, the essays in this volume assume significance in this context

The book has attempted to put incoherent themes of essays together in a coherent way, making 'space' and 'spatiality' as the linking thread in interpretations and explanations Almost every essay in the book intensely brings out the 'spatiality' of the theme it takes up For Instance, drawing on Lefebvre, M Satish Kumar traces the evolution of Black and White Towns in Madras, 1652-1850, and shows how the formation of the changing urban fabric was linked to battles between the colonial authorities and different caste groups, including the so-called Right- and Left-hand castes Kumar vividly establishes the terms under which an intense struggle developed in Madras over 'spatial idioms', the use of 'symbols' and 'colours', and production of identifiable neighbourhoods governing social relations and exchange Stuart Corbridge and Edward Simpson, in their essay 'Militant Geographies and Traumatic Space Ayodhya, Bhuj and the Contested Geographies of *Hindutva*', concern themselves with the 'politics of place and space', and explore the militant cartographies of the Sangh Parivar They show how putting 'Hinduism' in 'spatial-fix' and inventing Bharat Mata, the boundaries of which would stretch from 'a border with Iran to a border with Burma or even

Thailand' (p 71), the Sangh Parivar has sought to exploit and even produce 'traumatic space' to support its 'Hindutva agenda' and invent 'enemies', even though this claim is not accepted by a majority of caste Hindu Indians, Sikhs, dalits and adivasis Corbridge and Simpson further emphasise, 'geography – and place-making – is vital to the politics of Sangh Parivar, as vital indeed, as is history or archaeology, as just as sharply in need of challenge and contestation' (p 83)

Swapna Banerjee-Guha, in her essay 'Post-Modernism & Flexiblized Metropolis Dialectical Images of Mumbai', sees Mumbai as a 'heteropolis' nested in a recognised hierarchy of the global economy and technopoles of the core countries, directly affecting the nature of work and life-style She argues that, with a flexist imposition of global imperatives on local economies and cultures, and spatial logic of Fordism giving way to a new and more discordant global spatial order, cities like Mumbai, in order to suit imperatives, are undergoing a huge transformation of their urban spaces, involving a systematic capitalisation of urban space and reflecting the agenda of global capital of establishing a specific urban order at local level This, in turn, is creating contradictory processes of integration and segmentation – a basic characteristic of global city space And, political relations in such disjointed city space tend towards 'poly-anarchy' – a politics of grudging tolerance between various classes and ethnic power groups

Given the range of topics covered – from colonial caste geographies, urban geographies, militant ideologies and their geographies, feministic geography, political ecology and environmental issues, labour issues, and regional development – the appeal of the book is very broad

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Vasudha Dhagamwar: *Role and image of law in India The tribal experience* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2006, 414 pp , Rs 695 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3394-8

This is an exceptional comprehensive study of the social and legal status of three tribes in India the Bhils, the Pahadiyas, and the Santals The study describes the continuous deception of the Indian state towards the tribal communities, both during the colonial period and in independent India Vasudha Dhagamwar has succinctly given answers to the two research issues that she raises in the introduction (i) the nature of the law and the relations between the tribes and the state and (ii) the historical

background of the contemporary situation That the history and the sociology of any legal genre are crucial is witnessed in Dhagamwar's work More important, her involvement as a legal activist, fighting for the people on whom she is writing, gives this book the academic-activist combination, not usually found in books on the Indian legal system Thus, in terms of its subject matter and its methodology, this is a novel work

The introduction outlines the subject matter of the book That Dhagamwar has a human rights perspective is evident from the beginning, as she starts with how at the international level also there is a lack of any specific convention for the rights of the indigenous people The tone being set early, the rest of the narrative is a continuous story of human rights violation experienced by the tribal people She clarifies the relevance of criminal law and laws on land management and acquisition to the tribal situation

Part I of the book discusses 'Tribes in British India' Here, Dhagamwar discusses the condition of the three tribes under focus in colonial India She first talks about the Saura Pahadiyas – the least spoken about tribe She gives an account of their social, economic, territorial background, the kind of military operations that the East India Company undertook against them, and the complicated nature of the civil administration of a money economy that the Pahadiyas found difficult to internalise and subsequently declined in status

The subjugation of the Bhils by the British administration constitutes Chapter 5 of the book This Chapter narrates the sad story of how the Bhils became the employees of the Company guarding the passes in their territory that they once controlled In the name of establishing justice, law and order, the Bhils were subjugated by the British

The discussion of the situation of the Santals is unique as it deals with the effect of Permanent Settlement on their livelihood, the enactments of different laws between 1855 and 1871, and the kind of uprisings that the Santals led against the British It is only among the Santals that a collective resistance to the policies of the British government is observed Dhagamvar cited a number of settlements that the British made with the Santals, especially the Settlement Regulation of 1872 which has been continued to be manipulated even after independence

The next part of the book details 'Tribes in Independent India' Dhagamwar has not merely been a spectator to the contemporary times, but also a participant in the tribes' legal battle for justice against the state She first discusses the effects of public interest on the Bhils during the mid 1970s and the eventual 40th Amendment of the Constitution in

the post-Emergency era reflecting a pro-poor, pro-tribal attitude Dhagamwar, however, is sceptical whether one should consider law reform as a matter of right or merely a matter of luck suiting the political requirements of times

Next, Dhagamwar discusses her field report for the period 1979-82, when she regularly followed district court trials of Pahadiyas She witnessed delay in court proceedings, manipulation of witnesses, etc In her case study of the Santals, she describes the role of *bitlaha,* a kind of customary punishment that came in conflict with the state law She discusses some case details of the sessions court of Santal Parganas pointing out the class character of the legal system

Dhagamwar's conclusion not only summarises the comparative position of the three tribes, but it also raises theoretical questions of assimilation versus preservation, questions whether activists voicing tribal rights today are becoming the obverse of the government officers, taking away the voice of the affected themselves, and ends with the dilemma of whether post-colonialism has entered the tribal lives at all or whether post-colonialism is about attaining state power and giving up tribal identity

Although this book does case studies on three Indian tribes, it permits generalisations on the relationship between the marginalised tribes and the authoritative legal machinery As such, it is a seminal contribution to the sub-discipline of sociology of law

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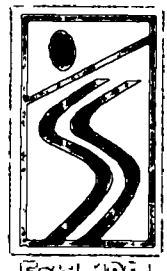
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ARTICLES

Sociology's Quest for 'Society' An Enquiry into the Current Pursuits and Needed Concerns in the Discipline
– ***P K.B Nayar*** 171

Assertive Identities, Indigeneity, and the Politics of Recognition as a Tribe The Bhutias, the Lepchas and the Limbus of Sikkim
– ***Vibha Arora*** 195

A Diasporic Indian Community Re-Imagining Punjab
– ***Steve Taylor, Manjit Singh and Deborah Booth*** 221

Informal Social Networks, Sonography and Female Foeticide in India
– ***Tulsi Patel*** 243

Aboriginal Businesses and Entrepreneurship in Canada Towards Economic Self-sufficiency
– ***S M Dahiwale*** 263

Sub-Contracting System and Women Workers A Study of Mica-Manufacturing Industry of Jharkhand
– ***Molly Chattopadhyay*** 289

BOOK REVIEWS

Ashish Nandy in Conversation with Ramin Jahanbegloo *Talking India* — *Renu Addlakha* 308

Girish Kumar *Local democracy in India Interpreting decentralization* — *M John Joseph* 310

Inge Hutter, N V Rajeswari, J S Hallad and B M. Ramesh *Child spacing and reproductive health in rural Karnataka, India From research to action* — *R Venkataratnam* 312

Jasbir Jain (ed) *Narrative of the village Centre of the periphery* — *Manish Kumar Thakur* 313

John Harriss *Power matters Essays on Institutions, politics, and society in India* — *Anirban Sengupta* 315

Mridula Mukherjee *Colonializing agriculture The myth of Punjab exceptionalism*	*Gaurang R. Sahay*	317
P K Misra, K K Basa and H K Bhat (eds) *M N Srinivas The man and his work*	*Nita Mathur*	320
Ranabir Samaddar (ed) *The politics of autonomy Indian experiences*	*Nikhlesh Kumar*	322
Ranjitha Mohanty and Rajesh Tandon (eds) *Participatory citizenship Identity, exclusion, inclusion*	*Biswambhar Panda*	324
Smita Tewari Jassal and Eyal Ben-Ari (eds) *The partition motif in contemporary conflicts*	*Satish Saberwal*	326
Sujata Patel and Kushal Deb (eds) *Urban studies*	*Laxmi Narayan Kadekar*	328
T N Madan *Images of the world Essays on religion, secularism, and culture*	*Rama Shyam*	331
Tulsi Patel (ed) *The family in India Structure and practice*	*Abha Chauhan*	332
Movie Notice *Collaboration Blues*		335
Books Received		336

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SOCIOLOGICAL BULLETIN
56 (2), May – August 2007, 171-194
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Sociology's Quest for 'Society': An Enquiry into the Current Pursuits and Needed Concerns in the Discipline*

P.K.B. Nayar

Introduction

I would like to submit before you some of my thoughts on what is our mission as sociologists and what is our vision about sociology in the 21st century In other words, what are our goals as sociologists and how are we going to achieve them, given the challenges posed *inter alia* by information technology and knowledge revolution I chose this theme for two reasons Sociologists have reduced human beings to objects of observation and theory making Global MNCs have transformed them into marketable commodities Humankind is now between the devil and the deep sea If we ourselves do not salvage it from the present malaise, and *it is my conviction that only we could do this,* there will be no other agency to redeem humankind from the catastrophic outcome that may be in store for it before the end of the century

I have structured my arguments as follows First, I have given a brief account of the status of sociology on the eve of the 21st century This will form the base for the subsequent parts of my discourse Second, I have described the state of the social world at the start of the 21st century This part deals with the tremendous changes in social structure and social relationships caused by modern technology culminating in the knowledge society Third, I have examined the equipment of sociology to achieve the desired goals in the backdrop of the scientific and technological revolution incorporating the information and knowledge explosion Since it is my feeling that the sociologist is increasingly loosing sight of the human element in his study of society, I have argued that, to be socially

relevant, sociology should address itself to the concerns of man and of the humankind and not just treat man as the object of observation and experimentation This will necessitate a re-look at the epistemological, conceptual, categorical, methodological and paradigmatical apparatus of the science

II
Sociology on the Eve of the 21st Century

The burden of this paper could be summarised in the following couplet which is an adaptation of T S Eliot's oft quoted passage [1]

Where is the human we have lost in society?
Where is the society we have lost in sociology?

We have to reclaim humankind from the quagmire of sociology through a restructuring and refocusing of the study of society – what one may call *'a counter system approach'*

Without being text-bookish, let me encapsulate the state of the art of sociology at the dawn of the 21st century Auguste Comte, the founding father of sociology, wanted the subject to be a science that could be compared to any exact, positive and empirical science and at the same time a science having a humanistic perspective He forged a happy combination of the two when he put sociology at the top of the hierarchy of sciences on the one hand, and the sociologist as the high priest of humanity, that is, society, on the other However, his priority was for the scientific part His attempt to separate sociology from philosophy warranted this focus, as raising the status of sociology to the position of a scientific discipline was the *raison d'être* for his exercise

Many of the subsequent writers followed in his footsteps, but then there was a shift towards the scientific aspect Even so, those who argued for positivism did not ignore the human side of the subject This was because of the very nature of the subject matter of the discipline On the one hand, it studies society in its static aspect (the descriptive side), on the other, it aims to understand the social process involved in its dynamic aspect (the analytical part), the knowledge of which was presumably to improve human condition Actually, this was a built-in element of the science, because the happy mix of enlightenment philosophy and humanistic science were very much in the air of the time which gave birth to sociology

Perhaps, it was in the writings of Karl Marx that we find the sublimation of the second line of thinking Marx put man (his concerns

and needs) as the central theme in his whole discourse His openly declared objective was to liberate man from the condition of bondage His conceptual and methodological apparatus were all geared to the liberation of mankind from the clutches of capitalism (He termed it the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie) Because he was living and writing in the midst of the capitalist society, he exhorted mainly the factory and industrial workers to unite against the capitalists But he did not exclude the peasants who eventually will be transformed into the ethos of the industrial workers by the deterministic march of history [2]

Let us now see at what point we have 'lost the world' (The usage is from the title of Peter Laslett's famous book *The World We Have Lost)*

Let me first take the evolution of sociology in America, because much of the third world sociology is patterned on the American model Tracing the history of American sociology, Joe R Feagin (2001) found that, in its earlier life as an academic discipline, sociology was almost entirely oriented towards the scientific and quantitative design Among the champions of this view were Giddings and Ogburn According to Giddings, 'Sociology can be made an exact quantitative science if we can get industrious men interested in it' (quoted in Feagin 2001 9) Ogburn went a step further In his Presidential Address before the American Sociological Association in 1929, he argued for the use of statistical methods in sociology and asserted that sociologists should not be involved as sociologists in improving society, instead they should focus on efficiently discovering knowledge about society He left it to 'some sterling executive' to apply the findings of sociological research to social issues (*ibid*)

Giving the findings of a survey of 2,559 articles appearing in the *American Sociological Review* from 1936 to 1984, Feagin says that only one in twenty articles covered major social and political events of this period He attributes this disinterestedness towards contemporary socio-political issues to the prevalence of 'value free' or 'pure science' perspective dominating sociological inquiry of the period According to Feagin, one of the reasons for this attitude was that most of the students who enrolled in sociology came from the elite class, which had vested interest in maintaining the status quo In part, this was also due to the all-white male character of the students of the period During this time, on y the voice of Gunnar Myrdal (1970) stood out as an exception Myrdal vehemently criticised the 'value free' argument in social science He declared

> Scientific facts do not exist *per se*, waiting for scientists to discover them A scientific fact is a construction abstracted out of a complex and inter-

> woven reality by means of arbitrary definitions and classifications The processes of selecting a problem and a basic hypothesis, of limiting the scope of study, and of defining and classifying data relevant to such a setting of the problem, involve a choice on the part of the investigator (quoted in Feagin 2001 9)

Since I am not interested in the history of the development of sociological theory *per se,* except as it relates to my presentation here, I do not speak about the different schools of thought in sociology or the merits or demerits of the theories put forward by these schools Suffice it to say that these schools had, and many of them continue to have, their supporters who study the behaviour of man from the perspective of theory building and instrument validation In that way, the emphasis was on establishing the superiority of one's newly established theoretical formulation and *not* on how it is a better tool in explaining and understanding the problems of mankind Even here, from the study of patterned behaviour and logical and purposeful action, the subject of enquiry occasionally strayed into psychology, symbolism, phenomenology, ethnomethodology and other areas

New theories have always embarrassed both the propounders and their critics This being the case in all sciences, new theories in sociology should be taken more as signs of growth of the discipline than as aberrations, though aberrations at times can be costly and counter productive

The important point as far as my enquiry is concerned is that in many cases the *original purpose* of formulating theories was forgotten Instead of understanding man and his social web, efforts were directed at countering existing theories by new ones The grander the theory the farther away was it from the work-a-day world of man 'The sad part of it', says Steven Seidman, 'is that sociological theory is hardly read today outside of its own enclave' (1994 2) [3]

Critics have not been found wanting, against this aberration The criticisms had their root in the basic issue – what is the ultimate objective of all these exercises In other words, for whom is sociology meant, and in what way, and for what purpose? These questions were aided by the emergent post modern theories of society and culture which questioned the very foundation of many of the existing theories It is now critiqued that instead of putting man as the central concern of sociology, he has been transformed into a material for sociological experimentation At the academic level, criticism is also levelled that instead of viewing man in his totality, he is dissected into many parts and each part is studied separately Also, is the criticism that many of the studies have strayed

away from theories and into superficialities The result is that sociology has been found to have lost its goal and sense of purpose – I would say its *identity* – and along with it, its prestige and standing among significant others

Seidman remarks

> Sociological theory has not abandoned this social mission (imaginative understanding of the origin and meaning of the social world) Yet, sociological theory and sociology in general have become more and more isolated from public life to the detriment of both sociology and public life As sociological theorists retreat from their role as public educators and advocates, their ideas lose social relevance More over, the general public suffers from sociology's diminishing social authority As sociologists have drifted into parochial disciplinary concerns, public officials, activists, policy makers, journalists and media commentators have assumed the chief role of public intellectual Unfortunately these groups are typically focused narrowly on specific issues or political events Their social ideas often lack a level of conceptual and historical depth that have characterised the human sciences (1994 2)

According to Immanuel Wallerstein,

> When we entered the 19th century, neither social science nor sociology existed, at least in institutional form or even as terms in intellectual discourse When we entered the 20th century, social science was a vague term encompassing a zone of intellectual concern and sociology was the name of a nascent, organised discipline that was beginning to receive official university sanction in a few western countries As we enter the 21st century, sociology is an organised course of study in most universities of the world but social science remains a vague term encompassing a zone of intellectual concern
>
> Since 1965, sociologists have scattered along many quite divergent paths This has created much dismay within sociology about the presumed future of the field and has led to much external social critique As for the views of the intellectual leaders of the field, it is unclear that any such leaders exist, at least in the sense that they did in the last 2 decades following the war (2000 25)

According to Bruno Latour (2000), this state of affairs is due to the fact that among all social sciences sociology is the only science which does not have a boundary Nazrul Islam (2004) goes further He gives a plausible explanation for this situation Echoing the voice of Bruno, he says that this lack of clear-cut boundary lines is at the root of many problems faced by the science

> While there is little controversy around the definitions regarding other social sciences, no definition of sociology so far has gone undisputed Auguste Comte, the founder of sociology, did not attempt to define sociology as he was preoccupied with a description of it as the science *sui generis* Definitions of other classical sociological writers were found to be incomplete while they were no doubt accepted as containing the quintessence of the subject It may be safe to say, however, that in the first phase of sociology not much strain was made to coin a scientific definition of the discipline or to draw a boundary line All were agreed that it was the study of man in society
>
> However, when sociology migrated to the US along with leading European experts, its growth was lateral To begin with, sociology was a brand new discipline and had to compete with established disciplines like economics and political science When it began as a discipline in the US, sociology did not have a clearly defined subject matter It set out to work on topics that were normally 'rejected or ignored' by established disciplines, like family, social problems, crime, urban and rural communities, ethnic groups etc It was what Robin Williams Jr termed as 'rag picking on the periphery of the intellectual market place' C Wright Mills saw this as a 'garbage collection' (Islam 2004 6)

According to Islam, 'the unrestrained growth of sociology has done the greatest damage to the discipline If the earlier attempt was legitimated by the need to get entry into the academia, the later attempts were due to the survival instinct Sociology has divided and subdivided into numerous speciality areas' (*ibid* 7)

A major reason for this state of affairs, as already pointed out, is that the sociologist does not have an identifiable domain which he can call his own and within which he can delimit his operations Such delimitation would have also helped the identification of concepts and categories, sophistication of equipment and tools, and focusing of findings and conclusions, in fact an identity for the discipline and for its findings As it is, the resources of the sociologist are spread thin and whatever he finds after elaborate enquiry, however rigorous and scientific his methodology be, will be dismissed by the public as commonsense

The point is more tersely put by Latour (2000) According to him, the problem does not end here It has prompted the sociologist to put forward tall claims that the entire canvass of human activity forms his legitimate field for portrayal This claim has also prompted the sociologist to come out with his own definition of the discipline Teachers of sociology will recall that they are befogged with definitions galore which are worse confounded by textbook writers attempting to reformulate and redefine the premises according to their own fertile imagination

While this has given the researcher a free hand in the choice of topics for study, identification of methodologies to be used and formulation of his own conclusions, the lay public dismisses them as commonplace The worst part of the whole exercise is that the common man goes back with a feeling that sociology is the study of the obvious and that the sociologist in many cases is trying to reinvent the wheel According to Anthony Giddens, 'commonplace assertions are disguised in a pseudo scientific language' (1982 2) 'The findings of the social sciences are regarded with suspicion not because they question commonsense beliefs but, on the contrary, because they only reiterate in pretentiously technical language what everyone already knows anyway' (Giddens 1996 161) It is in order to circumvent this problem that Latour (*ibid*) is arguing for a *'social' sociology* which will have more narrow focus, but more meaningful subject matter

In the introduction to the volume *What Has Sociology Achieved?*, Christopher G A Bryant and Henk A Becker found that 'In none of the five societies (USA, UK, France, Germany, and Holland) with which we have been principally concerned, can sociologists feel confident that the institutional structure of teaching and research in sociology, and the wider cultural and political context in which they take place, are entirely satisfactory' (1990 3) What has sociology achieved in the western world since 1950? Answer

> on the face of it, it has achieved a very great deal In North America it has greatly expanded what was already a considerable presence in universities and colleges, whilst in the higher education systems of Western Europe it has enjoyed even more spectacular growth if only because its beginnings were so much smaller Production of books and articles has also increased enormously, and most people have now at least heard of sociology even if they seldom have an accurate idea of what it is This however is only one side of the story *The other, in many societies, has to do with growing government, media and business indifference, suspicion or even downright hostility towards the discipline* (*ibid*) (emphasis added)

> It is not practical here to go into how this has come about, in any detail No doubt exaggerated expectations of sociology played their part In Britain in the 1960s there may have been a belief in some quarters that the identification of social laws, trends or developments would some how guide government and people towards rates of economic growth comparable to those found in Germany and France In America, Converse has drawn a contrast between the highly optimistic attitude of the audience which suffused the symposium to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Social Sciences Building of the University of Chicago in 1954 and the pessimism that hung over the fiftieth anniversary symposium in 1979 (*ibid* 1)

The authors continue

> In America, sociology was associated by its critics as inspiring and promoting welfare and other legislations which put heavier burden on the tax payer, and joining groups with special agendas – Marxist activists, campus agitations, liberation theology, gay rights, and the like In Britain, sociology's failure to deliver the promised goods of remedies for unemployment and economic decline and in the Continent, its mistaken association with socialism, social democracy and conservatism were the reasons for their unpopularity (ibid 2)

According to Bryant and Becker, there is one more reason for the crisis in western sociology

> There is, however, one crucial respect in which we sociologists have been our own worst enemies – namely, our readiness to dramatise debate as a war of the schools and reflection as the crisis of our discipline Over the last quarter-century sociology has sustained an extraordinarily intense theoretical debate between representatives of competing modes of sociological enquiry For the partners the experience has often been exhilarating Among the onlookers, however, the disorderly spectacle appeared at best an indulgence and at worst an object of contempt (1990 3)

Several insights appear from the above reasoning One is that some sociologists have a tendency to claim for their discipline more than what it could possibly deliver This may be due to several reasons One is of course the feeling that anything and everything under the sun is a legitimate field of sociological enquiry and as such could be taken up for study and analysis Another is the assumption that sociology can offer solutions to all social problems A third is the belief that available sociological concepts, methodologies and paradigms are capable of analysis of all social phenomena and situations

Yet another reason is the ambivalence prevailing among many sociologists about the ends in social research and the means to achieve them One of the greatest obstacles to the adequate recognition of the usefulness of sociology, according to Martin Bulmer (1990), is the self-doubt which permeates discussions of applying sociology among sociologists themselves Sociology as an academic pursuit struggles under a number of burdens some of which are self-imposed The internal obstacle stems from the way in which the purposes of sociology as an intellectual endeavour are construed and in particular the (unscientific) way in which the different elements involved in research and policy formulations are seen as relating to each other (These elements are

theorising, empirical enquiry, and practical application) Most researches are done without much care for a rigorous theory to back them up, sometimes policies are formulated on the basis of theory alone without having tested their validity through empirical studies

There is also an assumption in some professional circles that as in the case of other social sciences, for example, economics, theory can he applied to problem solving issues as a matter of course According to Bryant and Becker, this is very much the case with British and European sociologists

> A strong strain in the sociology of Britain and Europe, Britain in particular, has been the cultivation of theoretical sociology as an end in itself, untrammelled by empirical concerns as if sociology were a brand of social philosophy rather than an empirical social science Even those who have moved away from such solipsism to acknowledge the role of research, regularly disparage applied research (1990 5)

The Indian Scenario

Indian sociology represents two broad strains of thought – the Indologist, later modified by the British anthropological influence and the American strain which is now fairly established in the universities and research institutes in India A detailed account of this was given in the Presidential Address of Partha Nath Mukherji in 2005 and published in the *Sociological Bulletin* (55/2, 2006)

The quintessence of the latest position of sociology in India is given in a special issue of *Seminar* (495, November 2000) The picture of sociology, portrayed here by eminent Indian sociologists is not a rosy one Sociology is not a popular subject on campus and the popularity is decreasing steadily (see also UGC 2001) The major reasons are that the syllabus and teaching methods are archaic and uninspiring and the subjects taught lack relevance Consequently, the students do not find any use for their knowledge either for getting a job or for using it in everyday life Government and other agencies which could use sociological knowledge for policy making or programme implementation find no use for it either

The public find that commonsense materials are cloaked in jargons which do not make any sense to them They prefer media reports to those of social scientists because they feel that they (media reports) are readable and comprehendible

According to P C Joshi, 'lack of relevance was the "key problem" of the social sciences in the underdeveloped countries like India, where

social science had completely failed to provide solutions to basic social problems' (1972 25) He attributes this to the 'colonial mind' – uncritical acceptance of western theory, the 'ivory tower professionalism' associated with the ambition of social scientific value neutrality, and the emphasis on technical sophistication without purpose' (*ibid*)

Sociology in India is facing an identity crisis On the one hand, it has not been able to liberate itself from the anthropological bond André Béteille (2000) tells us that, in spite of his major contribution in the sociological field, American and European academics consider him as an anthropologist According to D N Dhanagare, 'Though teaching and research in sociology had expanded enormously, sociology seemed to have lost (or never managed to find) its identity as a discipline' (1980 24) Teaching sociology in the regional languages also has contributed to difficulties for the subject and for its takers (both students and teachers) Absence of standard text books and lack of terminological, conceptual, theoretical and methodological rigour have resulted in the inability to ensure standards in teaching and testing (Shah 2000)

On the other hand, globalisation has resulted in a major part of sociological research being taken away from universities and reputed research institutes by commercial agencies and NGOs which have little need or consideration for theoretical backing for their findings Most of them are doing only social surveys anyway The hijacking of certain components of sociology by commercial research agencies for human engineering has created new problems for the science

III
The Social World at the Start of the 21st Century

The social world at the start of the 21st century reflects highly volatile and rapidly changing scenarios Much of this could be attributed to the drastically changed global geopolitical and economic map but much is also contributed by the surge of science and technology In fact, it will be fair to say that both politico-economic and scientific-technological factors have contributed to the current vibrant but volatile global scenario

Ethnic troubles, fundamentalism and terrorism have opened up their big jaws to engulf anything and everything that they can lay hands on The uniqueness of the new situation is that hardly any nation is free from these scourges They have not only created problems in international politics, within nations, they have let loose fissiparous and centrifugal tendencies so that the science of sociology which is built on the foundation stone of stability and enduring norms has landed up in a state of ambivalence in explaining such situations From the sociological point

of view, these have upset all traditional explanations, whether structural-functional or conflict or other Explanations based upon rationality or shared norms or reciprocal expectations are of little use in the analysis of social relations in a highly explosive and exploitative world

Globalisation and its ally liberalisation have contributed the economic dimension for the destabilisation of the existing social order In the unequal and unethical competition of MNCs for capturing markets, aided and abetted by their national governments, everything has been transformed into marketable commodities through aggressive sales promotion and manipulation of consumer behaviour Sociology should have a new meaning when social man, the unit of its study, manipulated by human engineering, acts not according to commonly shared social norms and values but on the basis of engineered norms and values that are geared to the needs of the MNCs

To these politico-economic factors have to be added the scientific-technical factors While many inventions and discoveries in the past were of indirect use for human beings, modern discoveries have an organic connection with the human biology whether it is cloning, organ transplant or even weapons of mass destruction One need not over-emphasise the magnitude of exploitation of the fruits of science and technology by multinationals which has resulted in large-scale environmental pollution, resource drain and other hazards to health and well-being of humankind Their never ending need for raw materials and unethical technological practices have resulted in deforestation, desertification, dumping of toxic waste and other dangerous practices which pose gigantic health problems to humanity Their anxiety to dump unhealthy consumer products on the unwary citizen, especially of the third world countries, has brought another dimension of colossal health hazard Biotechnology has reached a stage which would alter the property of genes and, through it, the very nature of human behaviour, creating new problems for the social order Human engineering, coupled with human cloning, could fundamentally alter the physical and mental characteristics of the human being, and this may challenge not only the accumulated knowledge and wisdom in sociology but those in all human and social sciences

Let me give you a couple of examples of how family and social mores are being changed by biotechnology The large scale use of amniocentesis is tilting the sex ratio against women in many North Indian states and the consequent shortage of women in the marriage market may result in the restoration of fraternal polyandry in society Again, large-scale organ transplant has contributed to a booming racket

in kidney transplant in metropolitan cities and with unethical international and touristic overtones

Information and knowledge revolutions have become a major factor of profound significance in the new millennium and they have revolutionised society in a manner which has no parallel in the past They have unfolded scenarios that have long standing implications for the humankind What is more intriguing from the point of human society is that new information and new knowledge are coming in such amazing abundance and with such terrific speed that no reasonable estimation of what all these would lead to in terms of the social order is beyond meaningful prediction or reasonable calculation The entry of nano technology in this field is another factor to be reckoned with in the years to come as this would make most of man's present achievements redundant Nano technology will have multiplier effect on all sectors of human life and may lead to an entirely new social order of unpredictable nature and magnitude Never before in the history of humankind has so much happened in society in such profoundness and within so little time

According to UNESCO (2005), 21st century geopolitics will be deeply influenced and reshaped by the emergence of knowledge societies Knowledge and information will increasingly become strategic resources *par excellence* as is illustrated by the quick growth of secrecy in the most advanced industrial societies over the past decades Thus, the crucial political challenge in knowledge societies will concern the struggle for control of knowledge resources Knowledge societies will be increasingly confronted with doubts about the future of humanity and the planet Mounting dangers linked to the dwindling of natural resources could accentuate existing asymmetries, particularly North-South asymmetries Most local or international conflicts are more or less closely related to struggles for the control of natural resources – whether such conflicts originate in the rivalries over raw materials or in the antagonistic uses of the same resource by different actors

Universal dissemination of knowledge within knowledge societies could be accompanied by a resurgence of conflict arising from resource scarcity – water wars, energy wars, wars to control increasingly scarce strategic resources One of the challenges of knowledge societies is sustainable, concerted and peaceful forms of resource use to prevent conflicts and wars through regulation and mediation

The old system of collecting data and sifting them to get the necessary information has disappeared Data is now transformed into information and information into knowledge

There is only one limitation, human mind will not be able to work as swiftly as the computer and so there is always a time lag between

availability of knowledge and its application Here, however, comes a problem which no computer so far invented can solve – wisdom Unless knowledge is converted into wisdom or applied wisely, application of knowledge to the situation called for, however sophisticated and apparently rational the knowledge is, will be of no use [4] As wisdom varies from man to man, the advantage in the use of knowledge will be in the hands of those who possess superior wisdom One can only say that those who control knowledge will also control wisdom But one cannot say for certain that the knowledge will be used wisely The consequent error can be at times catastrophic and disastrous as some international decisions and courses of action following them have shown

Knowledge is power Knowledge societies are arguably to be a source of human development and empowerment in that access to knowledge will *ipso facto* contribute an element of power UNESCO (2005 27) thinks that the revolution in new technologies and the new phase of globalisation that accompanies it will add a new source to the third phase of Industrial revolution However, UNESCO's fond hope that this will strengthen peoples and countries all over the world does not seem to agree with reality Take, for example, the UN Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 The knowledge revolution assumes that knowledge societies will be able to enforce this right with ease because with the availability of knowledge to everyone, things will become transparent Actually studies have shown that the fact is otherwise

The MNCs in the capitalist countries want to have stable governments and support governments in developing countries (with political stability) which are repressive Emilie M Hauer-Burton and Kiyoteru Tsutsui (2005) found that in the developing third world countries, where governments are receiving economic support from capitalist nations whose primary goal is to maintain favourable conditions for investment, the likelihood of human rights violation increases Frank Mitchell and James McCormick (1988) found that a large number of governments with bad human rights records are economically dependent on capitalist states The empowerment aspect of the knowledge societies in other fields also is suspect It may give new weapons to governments to suppress ethnic and cultural minorities or other inconvenient elements It may become an equally disastrous instrument in the hands of terrorists and other unlawful and outlawed agencies

Coming to the availability and use of computers and internet facilities across the globe, *a sine qua non* of knowledge storage and knowledge use, UNESCO itself admits that this is a privilege which is still in the hands of the countries of the North According to UNESCO

(2005 29), only 11 per cent of the world's population has access to the internet Ninety percent of people connected come from industrialised countries Indeed, while we speak of a global information society and of a World Wide Web, the fact is that 82 per cent of the population account for only 10 per cent of connections in the world This *digital divide* is first and foremost a question of access to infrastructures Some two billion people are not linked to an electricity grid – the precondition of mass access to the new technologies Furthermore, there is a problem of affordability Computers are expensive The provision of internet services constitutes a very considerable investment in urban areas and is in short supply in the countryside In addition, familiarising oneself with the computer requires computer literacy which is also unaffordable to the poor (*ibid*) UNESCO then identifies the following factors responsible for digital divide (a) economic resources, (b) geography, (c) age, (d) gender, (e) language, (f) education, (g) employment, and (h) disabilities

The high tide formed by new inventions and discoveries culminating in the knowledge society is going to sweep away part of man's innate characteristics in at least two directions – the biological and the social In turn, the new biological aspects will result in further changes contributing to perhaps an entirely new social order Already, one of the outcomes of the knowledge society is the new cultural behaviour patterns A specific web culture is built up by a process of distribution in which there is a radically new cultural behaviour pattern particularly as regards personal projection through the web pages (*ibid* 53)

The knowledge revolution is going to add to the stratification of society both within nations and between nations At the global level, this will further strengthen those who presently control knowledge and, to that extent, bring a cleavage between the rich and poor nations Within a nation, the gap between the rich who can afford the internet and the poor who do not have access even to a telephone line is gong to widen

UNESCO (*ibid* 168) also foresees a widening of the gender gap due to the surge of information and knowledge societies Already two-thirds of the world's women are illiterate As illiteracy will be one of the biggest factors in knowledge divide, the position of women in the knowledge societies will further accentuate the problem of gender justice

The Human Development Report has pointed out some of the complexities of globalisation at the international level

> Globalisation is forging interdependence yet the world seems more fragmented between the rich and the poor, between the powerful and the powerless Economically, politically and technologically the world has never seemed freer or more unjust. If the present global progress continues

> at such snail's pace, it will take more than 130 years to get rid of the world of hunger (UNDP 2002 346)

Knowledge is not innocent The power that it gives to those who have access to it could be used for good or evil Neo-colonial governments can use it to promote their hegemonies over weaker nations, terrorist groups can use it to streamline and sophisticate their anti-establishment activities The more of knowledge, the more of its use in these directions

It is argued that education will be the first social institution to be invaded by IT since giant corporations know the big advantage that will await them if they make education their handmaid for business promotion It is calculated that around 75 to 80 per cent of IT world uses education as one of its major inputs With the growing use of computers and multimedia technology in education there will be commensurate change in the traditional mode of acquiring, storing and transmitting knowledge Computers, CD-ROM and videotapes will increasingly replace school text books There will be a radical transformation of the structure and dynamics of the school system and, with it, in the concept of the institution of education With the commercialisation and market-isation of educational institutions, the schools will be 're-engineered' in much the same way as business corporations and they will form part of gigantic multinational agencies which will prepare the needed software for the new era education The new technologies will not be adding to the curriculum, they will be transforming it, if not replacing it completely

David Beckett (1988) speaks of the crisis of the universities in the Information Technology and knowledge revolution era With virtually all orthodox grounds and the justification for the once elevated position either gone or considerably reduced, they need to think and articulate anew their role in a world which has no use for their traditional services, sets new rules for the game of prestige and influence and views with growing suspicion the values they stood for Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Leeds, Zygmont Bauman (1988), speaking of education in the postmodern era, says that both the entire range of multimedia provisions of courses and subject materials and the pedagogy by which these are meant to advance learning will be globalised and converted into broad banded multimedia technology In the new set-up, knowledge will be separated from the teacher and transferred into online material and pedagogies Knowledge in computerised societies is becoming 'externalised' from the knower, in the new set-up, education will be marketised and knowledge will be commodified – the offshoot of privatisation, which is the offshoot of globalisation

Globalisation – privatisation – marketisation of education – commodification of knowledge – separation of knowledge from the teacher – transformed into computer software, made available online through CD-ROM and other devices In this scheme of things, the teacher becomes redundant, the old books become redundant, old methodologies become redundant, and, in fact everything old becomes redundant I made this elaboration on the impending change in education (a familiar ground for all of us) because you can easily visualise the changes that would come to the ontological, epistemological and metaphysical base of education in the years ahead

Feagin has a more alarming picture to place before us He quotes Sun Microsystems's co-founder and chief scientist Bill Joy to

> warn of a major technological threat to human beings – the new technological robots and other human engineered organisms In Joy's informed prediction, uncontrolled self-replication by robots with artificial intelligence could pose a serious threat to human beings in the coming decades Computer scientists predict that by 2030, computers will be ever more human, conscious and intelligent Computer capacity will be a million times greater then and computerised robots will be much smarter than human beings Given the incredible power of these new technologies, should we be asking how we can best coexist with them? (2001 16)

IV
Sociology's Quest for 'Society': Needed Concerns

The 51st volume of the *British Journal of Sociology* (51/1, 2000) contains special articles addressed to the issue of 'how sociology is facing up to the challenges and opportunities posed by what many see as the millennial changes taking place, and how sociology may be positioned in relationship to a world apparently undergoing widespread transformations' Some of the famed sociologists, Manuel Castells and Immanuel Wallerstein, among others, find their place among the galaxy of writers in this volume All the authors have aired their views on what will be the shape and future of sociology in the 21st century and the millennium changes required in sociology According to Castells (2000), the society of the 21st century will be a 'network society' A fundamental feature of the social structure in the information age is its reliance on networks as the key feature of social morphology While networks are forms of social organisations, they are now empowered by new information/communication technologies so that they become able to cope at the same time with flexible decentralisation and focused decision making Wallerstein (2000) argues that sociology should be

transformed into a reunified historical social science involving intellectual development from across the globe He feels, though he does not state this explicitly, that much of social action will be happening in the third world countries and sociology should take cognisance of it to be really relevant and meaningful in the new millennium

While the changes portrayed in Section III of this presentation may not happen immediately, it is likely that many of the elements of change will be experienced in the coming decades and by the end of the 21st century, especially with the coming of nano technology, things may take a faster turn Drastic alteration in the material condition of social units will take place, partly contributed by the changed eco-structure, partly by globalisation and partly by knowledge explosion These changes will affect the North and South differentially, the South having to bear the brunt of them They would have cumulative and multiplier effects No social scientist or, for that matter, no scientist, can now forecast the effects of the geo-political and info-knowledge challenges on micro level man-to-man relationships and macro level social network relationships

One thing is certain The science of society will have to absorb these changes in its vocabulary and work-book much more than other social sciences, especially since sociology claims to go into all aspects of man's activity and behaviour

What does the new scenario call for, from the sociologist? Continue to explain what is happening and why it is happening the way it does by using existing concepts and categories, tools and techniques and methodologies and paradigms, minimally altered to accommodate the sea changes? Or should he think of a new perspective and approach? Here, I would like to present a modified version of Marx's famous and oft quoted declaration in the following words

Sociologists have only interpreted society in various ways,
The real task is to change the focus of this interpretation

According to Ulrich Beck (2000) who calls the 21st century the second stage of modernity or reflexive modernity as against simple globalisation of the first stage, globalisation changes not only the relations between and beyond national states and societies but also the inner quality of the social and political itself which is indicated by more or less reflexive cosmopolitanisation as an institutionalised learning process

Goran Therborn (2000) gives some clues in this direction According to Therborn the sociology of the 21st century is likely to differ from that of the 20th century He assesses the current situation and the future

prospects of sociology by spelling out the trajectory over the past century of sociology's predominant assumption about the character and direction of the social world and its own task of cognition He locates sociology in three spaces of identity – a space of disciplines, a stage of everyday parlance, and a space of imagination and investigation From this he goes on to the cosmological, epistemological and spatial trajectories which will become prominent in the new era and he gives some indicators of a new and very different future of sociology But the objective of the analysis has not changed and continues to be the same, only the trajectories are new (Incidentally, there is a basic assumption in the writings of all 'North-centred' sociologists that change in global society can be measured on a uniform scale because all changes will be based on, and determined by, changes in the North for which all instruments have been designed)

My humble submission is that since social change will affect the countries of the north and south differently and since already many of the assumptions and ethos of Euro-American sociology have been challenged even in their own societies, the projections and paradigms of the North will not be appropriate to the South where there are very few takers for a purely objective and value free sociology [5] They (meaning the South) are swayed as much by subjective considerations as objective Much of the ethos and ethic of this region are still situated in traditional values and the revival of fundamentalism may contribute to strengthen them further Even in the North, there are supporters who argue for the rehabilitation of the subjective, emotional content in human behaviour and decision making process

Douglas S Massey devotes his entire Presidential Address at the 69th Annual Conference of the American Sociological Association 2001 to the importance of emotion in decision making According to Massey,

> emotional instinct precedes rational instinct though they operate parallelly Given the parallel operation of the emotional and rational brain within every human being, it is inevitable that all judgements, perceptions and decisions will have both emotional and rational components Moreover, because of our evolutionary history and cognitive structure it is generally the case that unconscious emotional thoughts will precede and strongly influence out rational decisions Thus our much valued rationality is really more tenuous than we humans would like to believe and it probably plays a smaller role in human affairs than prevailing theories of rational choice would have it
>
> Perhaps much more than the sociologists, the social engineers have known better the decision process of the human mind (brain) 'Social scientists

> have relegated emotionality to the backside and devoted more attention to a fully rational account of human society Evidence is incontrovertible that human behaviour has both rational and emotional components and that the latter cannot be reduced to the former On the contrary, if anything, emotionality supersedes rationality in both timing and influence (2002 6)

A re-structured or re-prioritised sociology, focusing on man's concerns as the central issue in the study of society, and sociological enquiry focusing very much on human concerns, is the need of the time Several centuries ago, Francis Bacon declared that the purpose of discoveries and inventions in science was to make the life of man better 'Empirical knowledge, that is, knowledge of the forces that surround us in our world, means the power to control and manipulate those forces for human well being' (quoted in Gilkey 1977 118) This should apply *a fortiori* in the case of the science of man [6] In the Nobel Laureates' Conference in 1975, twenty-seven Nobel Laureates and seven religious divines, who assembled there, reaffirmed Bacon's view (*ibid*) We do not have to evolve a new science of sociology for effecting the required change, we only need to re-frame and rearrange our objectives and priorities

Theory building is not the important pre-occupation of this new pursuit either In an extremely volatile situation, a new theory will not have long life and may become redundant the moment it comes out of the testing ground As Gosta Esping-Andersen (2000) argues, sociologists should worry less about being 'theory-less' In any case, we have ample number of theories to start our enquiry

Established sociologists like Wallerstein have always argued that sociology will remain incomplete as long as it keeps the South out or try to project the North's image on to the South Paradoxically, the North's ignoring or domineering over the South is matched only by the South's eagerness to accept and absorb whatever that comes from the North Already criticisms have been raised in the African (Mlambo 2006) and South Asian (Mukherji 2005) regions about the need for coming out of a captive, colonial mind and for evolving new paradigms for the sociology for emergent societies However, aside from the exhortations, the authors of these exercises have not been able to induct a set of new breed sociologists into their fold to demonstrate the appropriateness, pragmatism and superiority of their sermons Over and above, they too do not make human well being the primary concern of their alternative paradigm It is possible that the North may take the demand for a restructuring of priorities and methodologies as a passing episode in the history of sociology and as such the wind would blow away causing,

may be, minimum damage to the establishment as had been the case with so many critical periods in the history of sociology [7] One advantage of the present situation is that forward looking sociologists themselves in the North have been feeling the need for a change in the goals of sociology and this would inspire at least a few Northern sociologists to try the new path (Feagin 2001)

Perhaps, India could be a prime lever in revamping sociology, at least in the third world, because India has a moral reason for it Among the third world countries, India occupies a pioneering position in sociology Not only does it have the largest number of graduate schools of sociology and students and professionals working in them as well as a large number of institutes – government and private – pursuing research Sociology is taught in more than 100 universities in India There are seventy-seven specialised research institutions, approximately 10,000 teachers in sociology besides those employed in research institutions and 100,000 undergraduates, 6,000 Post Graduates and 200 doctoral candidates are on board every year (UGC 2001)

In India, universities continue to be the major centres for social research The major sources of funding for independent research are the UGC and the ICSSR The different ministries of the Government of India give grants for project research which has to be in the areas identified by them Private agencies conduct research or fund research projects only for themes of interest to them and these are mainly market/consumer research

The Indian Sociological Society is the largest national association of sociologists in the world in terms of life members and the second largest in terms of total members But, as mentioned earlier, Indian sociology is plagued by so many drawbacks that it is difficult to identify a nodal agency that could take up this mission and achieve this aim

It is too much to expect that there will be a change in the mindset or change of perspective in the case of established sociologists in this country or, for that matter, the world over There is neither any provocation of any sort nor any incentive of any type that could be offered for this change Knowledge-attitude-practice (KAP) studies tell us that even if the correct attitude is present, the subject need not commit himself to it because of the sheer inertia that is built into one's personality structure

Then, from where could the initiative come? Nearly three decades ago Alfred McClung Lee, President of the American Sociological Association, 1975-76, published a highly provocative and challenging book, *Sociology for Whom* (1978, see also Lee 1973), in which he made an eloquent plea for liberating sociology from the vested (world political,

economic and military) interests which had begun to preside over its destiny He urged his fellow professionals to discard their academic isolation and rivalries and gain first-hand objective knowledge of the way things really work in modern society He proposed that they pass the practical information along to everyone as service to citizens, consumers and neighbours, no matter how unpopular the exposures may be to international power brokers and academic manipulators Sociologists, he argued, must demystify their thinking about life and living and report more accurately the changing social scene

Lee believes that the brightest future of sociology as a discipline in the service of humanity rests with creative social scientists – on their curiosity, courage, integrity and concern for the human condition He pleads for staunch professional ethics and for innovative, independent observation and thinking, especially now when the world desperately needs a more humane society 'Concerns with the humane no longer need to be disguised with jargons or with needless statistics – even though such practices do persist' (1978 84)

I am not sure whether Lee's plea was taken seriously by his fellow intellectuals, for, exactly twenty-five years later another President of the American Sociological Association (2000-2001) Feagin repeated an identical plea before the Association with a new set of arguments and evidences In his Presidential Address – 2000, marking the dawn of the new Millennium, and captioned 'Social Justice and Sociology: Agendas for the 21st Century', Feagin (2001) placed before the sociological profession the following agenda (a) bring social justice back to the centre, (b) nurture the counter system approach, (c) be more self-critical, and (d) recognise and stress the importance of teaching sociology

It is now time for introspection How many in the profession have given a patient hearing to Lee's or Feagin's pleas, however crucial they are for today's humankind? Sociologists obsessed with theory building and scientising sociology will certainly look at their ideas with suspicion as they are suggesting a counter-system approach questioning premises considered sacred My own feeling is that one should try Feagin's fifth suggestion, namely, teaching sociology Lee also envisions this point Instead of looking to the top, one should look to the bottom for effecting the needed orientation and course of action and try to train the new generation of sociologists in the new ethos, etymology and epistemology of the redesigned discipline As Lee concludes his eloquent treatise, 'sociologists and their students can even work at discovering how human beings can initiate and then develop their own more liveable scenarios' (1978 223)

The task is not easy but that is no reason why it should not be tried – in order to accept the responsibilities of the profession and do justice to it I fervently hope that the thoughts presented here will not go wasted but will appeal to some bold, innovative and forward-looking minds for critical enquiry and serious pursuit

Notes

* Presidential Address delivered at the 32nd All India Sociological Conference of the Indian Sociological Society at Chennai, December 27-29, 2007

1 The lines in T S Eliot's poem are as follows

> Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
> Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

2 Writings of and on Marx are in plenty However, *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought* by T B Bottomore *et al* (1987) may be perused with advantage

3 According to Seidman,

> Many sociological theorists still aspire to the role of public critic or educator but they are isolated from the public The culture of sociological theory is more and more removed from general public culture Sociologists continue to produce theorists of impressive talent and imagination but their ideas are atypically addressed to other members of this expert culture The growing insecurity of sociological theory reflects in part the fact that theorists simply do not speak a broad public language (1994 2)

4 A wise decision cannot be taken by the computer It can at best evolve an 'engineering solution' According to C E Lindblau and D K Cohen,

> 'information and analysis provide only one route among several to social problem solving A great deal of the world's problem solving is and ought to be accomplished through various forms of social interaction that substitute action for thought, understanding or analysis In addition, other forms of information and analysis – ordinary knowledge, and causal analysis foremost among them – are often sufficient or better for social problem solving (1979 10)

5 In this connection, see the Special Issue of the *Sociological Bulletin* (54/3, 2005) on South Asia entitled 'The State of Sociology Issues of Relevance and Rigour'

6 The conference of Nobel Laureates also noted that 'the increase of man's power through applied knowledge has not increased his virtue or his wisdom Rather threatening his human well being, if not his survival, that increase has raised the question of his virtue and his wisdom more sharply than ever' (Robinson 1977 124)

7 Sociology has faced many crises during its history – Radical Sociology, Critical Sociology, Marxist Sociology, Postmodernism, and so on A well-known, though much criticised and a little out-dated, full-length book is that of A W Gouldner *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (1970, see also Bottomore 1975)

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Assertive Identities, Indigeneity, and the Politics of Recognition as a Tribe: The Bhutias, the Lepchas and the Limbus of Sikkim

Vibha Arora

Using the case of the Bhutias, the Lepchas, and the Limbus, who are defined as tribes in contemporary Sikkim, this article discusses the 'politics of identity' and the 'identity politics' of being and becoming tribal in India The cultural politics transforming a group into a tribe and a 'Scheduled Tribe' reflects its political strength and power to influence the regime of representation in order to appropriate preferential entitlements and resources Being tribal does not necessarily indicate indigeneity, oppression, or subaltern status, it signifies political assertion and empowerment in Sikkim

[Keywords democracy and citizenship, ethnicity, historical sociology, indigenous groups, Sikkim]

This paper treats tribal identities and interests, indigeneity and their cultural representations as not being given, but as the emergent products of history, cultural politics and economic development of the Himalayan region in the last two centuries The discussion shows the interpenetration of politics and culture (Cohen 1974, 1993) in the construction and articulation of identities to establish, affirm and perpetuate boundaries between the self and the other, contextually and strategically, for symbolic-political-material ends (Barth 1969) Using a particular case of groups defined as tribes in contemporary Sikkim, I discuss the 'politics of identity' and 'identity politics' of being and becoming tribal in India [1] Identity contestations are evident in the debates engendered by the implementation of the Scheduled Tribe (ST) Orders of 1978 and 2002 If constructing cultural identity is about constructing cultural difference and

establishing boundaries, then deconstructing these identities is predicated in the act of their origin and transformation The (de/re) construction of the tribal identities of the *Lhopo, Monpa, and Tsong* (the Lepchas, Bhutias and the Limbus) takes 1835 to the present period as its canvas [2] This impressionist painting[3] analyses the crystallisation of identities by examining the impact of the colonial rule (1835-1947), self-government (1947-1975) and the post-colonial Indian state (since 1947) on a group's identification and its self-definition Deconstructing these identities involves the unsettling of definitions of the indigenous and migrant groups of Sikkim The current battle to gain recognition as an indigenous group and, more specifically, the entitlements associated with Scheduled Tribe status in Sikkim, indicate that tribal identity does not necessarily signify marginality, subalterneity and oppression, it reflects political empowerment of groups in Sikkim

The Lepchas refer to Sikkim as their *nye máyellyang* (garden of Eden), while the Bhutias term it their *sbas yul 'Bras mo ljongs* (hidden valley of rice and fruits), although the term 'Sikkim' originates in the Limbu word *Su khyim* meaning 'new house' Located in the Eastern Himalayas, Sikkim is the former Buddhist kingdom that was ruled by the Namgyal dynasty until its incorporation into India in 1975 Historically, Sikkim was a *de facto* protectorate of British India since the treaty of 1861, and the 1950 treaty with independent India continued its protectorate status until 1975 Out of its total population of half a million persons (540,493) in 2001, about 20 6 per cent are enumerated as Scheduled Tribes while the Scheduled Castes (exclusively of Nepali origin) comprise about 5 per cent of Sikkim's population Demographically, the Buddhists comprise a large minority of approximately 27 per cent, while 68 per cent of the total population are Hindus, 3 per cent are converted Christians and some Muslims settled here recently (Census 2001)

This paper is divided into three sections The first section deconstructs the ethnic categories of Sikkim stressing the assertiveness of tribal identities The second section discusses the intersection of politics of identity and identity politics in the identification of tribes in Sikkim and India The argument in both these sections moves between the particular case and the general situation to provide a comparative framework and an ethno-historical understanding of the being and becoming of tribes The final section discusses the iconic representation of the tribal people as the vanguard of environmental wisdom and custodians of alternative knowledge The tribal tag is now a 'desirable identity' and a sign of privilege associated with socioeconomic entitlements and rights Tribes are not disappearing but gaining ground with the

emergence of political consciousness in the community The self-perception and the struggles over tribal identification indicate these

I
Assertive Identities: The *Lhopa* (Bhutias), *Monpa* (Lepchas) and *Tsong* (Limbus)

The identity politics of contemporary Sikkim is layered and complicated by the cultural, religious, linguistic and racial diversity of the twenty-two groups residing there, and the class, educational and occupational differentiation within them Broadly speaking, there are three main ethnic categories in Sikkim the Lepchas, the Bhutias, and the Nepali groups There are cultural, religious and linguistic differences between these groups However, these broad categorisations underplay the competing definitions, the internal variations, and the intersections between the diverse ethnic groups in Sikkim Instead of strict demarcations or absolute hostilities between ethnic groups, there are degrees of inclusion and exclusion, which determine ethnic relations in Sikkim The situational selectivity of ethnic identity plays a crucial role in inter-ethnic relations These also serve as a buffer and a bridge between conflicting ethnic groups

I follow V Xaxa (1999a, 1999b) in treating tribes as ethnic groups by emphasising relationality and boundaries, these boundaries are defined linguistically, culturally and politically by the groups themselves, other groups, the state and the anthropologists Tribal identities are understood in terms of how they are defined by others and in terms of their own articulation and self-definition in relation to land and sacred landscapes Ethnic identities are not essentially fixed, as dynamic constructions, imagined relationally and visibly identified in those terms (Cohen 1974, 1993, Anderson 1983) Discourses not only represent identities, but also constitute personal and social identities by establishing the boundaries of difference from 'Others' (Foucault 1972, 1973) Identity, as a discourse of rights, is intimately connected to livelihood, entitlements and well-being These discourses articulate political consciousness, encourage social action in order to challenge and subvert dominant ideologies (Gramsci 1971)

Lepchas

The Lepchas term themselves *Rong* (a Lepcha word meaning ravine-folk or the dwellers of the valley) and they define themselves by their association with the sacred mountain Kanchenjunga that is regarded as

the source of their knowledge, culture, religion, wealth and resources, and the place of their origin They are the autochthones in their self-perception while anthropological discourse debates their indigeneity Gorer (1938 35) follows Lepcha self-definition but H Siiger and J Rischel (1967) agree with L A Waddell, who has argued that the Lepchas have Indo-Chinese origin and they migrated to Sikkim by way of the Assam valley Both consider the Lepchas to be an outlying member of the Naga tribes (Arleng or Mikir sub-group) (see Siiger and Rischel 1967 26-27) Many recent studies of the Lepchas are by Lepchas themselves, and they regard the Lepchas as indigenous to Sikkim (Tamsang 1983, Foning 1987, Gowloog 1995) This is also the official position of the Lepcha associations in the Darjeeling Hills and Sikkim The earliest Lepcha association – Mutanchi Rong Shezum – was established in 1925 at Kalimpong and invigorated during the 1970s, while the Lepchas of Sikkim became politically conscious after 1975 and established the Sikkim Lepcha Youth Association in 1993

Presently, the Lepchas live in Sikkim, Kalimpong and the Darjeeling Hills of West Bengal in India, in west Bhutan and in Illam district of Nepal They are concentrated in North Sikkim that also contains Dzongu, the Lepcha reserve Otherwise they are scattered in the multi-ethnic villages of Sikkim They are primarily agriculturists and a minority are in government employment They are polygamous and they practise bride price They trace descent patrilineally while giving importance to the matrilineal relations By religious affiliation they are sub-divided into followers of Buddhism, Shamanism and Christianity Shamanism or *mun* (in Lepcha) is considered to be their original religion In the 14th century, after the migration of the Bhutias to Sikkim, the majority were converted into Buddhism With the arrival of the Christian missionaries in the 19th century, they converted in large numbers in Darjeeling but only in small numbers in Sikkim Linguistically, they belong to the Sino-Tibetan family, the Tibeto-Burman subgroup, and the Kachin family (Thurgood *et al* 1985) The Lepcha language is considered to be difficult, and this explains why the Nepali groups term them *Lāpche*, which means vile speakers Many regard the Nepali term *Lāpche* as the origin of the name Lepcha The Tibetans use *Monpa*, which means dwellers of the Himalayan valleys and of India

Bhutias

It is widely accepted that the Sikkimese Bhutias migrated from Eastern Tibet in the 14th century under the leadership of Khye Bumsa (a Tibetan prince of the Minyak dynasty of Kham) In the 14th century, a covenant

was solemnised between the representatives of the Bhutias (Khye Bumsa) and the Lepchas (Tekong Tek) that legitimised Bhutia migration and settlement (Dolma and Namgyal 1908 12-13) In 1641,[4] three lamas, including Lhatsun Chenpo, crowned Phuntsog Namgyal, a descendant of Khye Bumsa as the first king of Sikkim (Waddell 1899 50-51, Dolma and Namgyal 1908 11-12)

The Bhutias are primarily agriculturists, pastoralists, traders and a minority are in government employment They are concentrated in the north, the east and the west districts of Sikkim and only a small proportion live in South Sikkim Like the Lepchas, the Bhutias trace descent patrilineally, are polygamous and practise bride price The Bhutias are sub-divided into followers of the Nyingmapa and the Kargyupa sects of Tibetan Buddhism In Tibet and the Himalayan region, the term 'Bhutia' connotes people of Tibetan descent who use one of the Tibeto-Burman languages They term themselves *Lhopo,* who are identified as the descendants of Khye Bumsa and other Khampas who migrated to Sikkim between the 14th and the 17th century and speak *Lhoke*, a language that belongs to the Sino-Tibetan family and Tibeto-Burman group (Thurgood *et al* 1985) The Scheduled Tribe Order of 1978 expanded the Bhutia category by including other Tibetan groups, namely, the Sherpa, the Dukpa, the Tibetan, the Dopthapa, the Kagatey and the Chumbiapa The Bhutias vehemently opposed this Order as, according to them, it diluted their ethnic identity In the early 1990s, the Sikkim Bhutia and Lepcha Apex Committee was formed consisting of six representatives each from the Lepcha and the Bhutia groups to safeguard their mutual interests and get this redefinition of the Bhutias revoked In 2002, the Bhutias accepted those other groups as belonging to the Bhutia category

The Lepchas and the Bhutias trace their social origins and the birth of their lineage ancestors to specific (sacred) sites such as the five peaks of Kanchenjunga, the other sacred mountains, lakes, caves and sites in Sikkim and the Darjeeling Hills They perform annual rituals to ensure the continuity of their lineages and regenerate their land These symbolic cultural dimensions of identity accentuate the politico-economic foundations of their indigeneity and identity This is not to deny that other groups such as the Limbus lack symbolic or ancestral connections with Sikkim's landscape

Limbus

The term Limbu means archers (Subba 1999 32), and it was popularly used in Sikkim and the Darjeeling Hills from the 19th century onwards

Yakthungba, meaning yak herders, is the ethnonym used by members to refer to themselves, while the Tibetans call them *Monpa* (also used for the Lepchas), the Lepchas and the Bhutias term them *Tsong,* which traces their origin in the Tsang region of Tibet and signals their occupation as cattle-herders and butchers (Risley 1894 37), and in East Nepal they are connoted as *Subba* [5] The community is sub-divided into ten clans whose migration histories often figure in these identity discourses

The Limbu language belongs to the Kiranti branch of the Tibeto-Burman language family According to Sprigg, its script shows similarities with the Tibetan and the Lepcha scripts, although it was later influenced more by the Devanagari script [6] Traditionally, the Limbus were animistic like the Lepchas However, in the last century, a large majority of them have become Hindus, and upwardly mobile Limbu families have sanskritised their lifestyles Some of them have become Christians in the Darjeeling Hills and Sikkim (Subba 1999 126) They are primarily agriculturalists, pastoralists and labourers, and some are in government employment in contemporary Sikkim The Limbus regard themselves the indigenous inhabitants of Sikkim and East Nepal (Limbuaan region) In fact, during the reign of Gyurmed Namgyal in the early 18th century, there was a massive Limbu rebellion in Sikkim that led to the outmigration of Limbus from Sikkim into Eastern Nepal (Risley 1894 5), while in Eastern Nepal they fought wars against the Gorkhas until submitting to them finally in 1774 (Pradhan 1991 80-83, Subba 1999 36-37) They are acknowledged to be one of the earliest settlers of Sikkim along with the Lepchas (Hooker 1891, Risley 1894, Siiger 1967 27, Pradhan 1991) but colonial administrative discourse progressively classified them as Nepalis Only a small proportion of the Limbu population immigrated into Sikkim in the 19th century Today, the single feature that distinguishes Limbu persons of Sikkimese origin from those of Nepali origin is the Sikkim subject certificate

Some Limbus blame the theocratic regime of the Namgyal dynasty for discriminating against the Limbus and reducing them to a minority in their own homeland (see Subba 1999 124-25) Archival research for the period 1830 to 1917 reveals that the British administrators were conscious that the Limbu were indigenous to Sikkim In 1835, when the British Raj annexed the Darjeeling Hills, officers commented that 'they were practically uninhabited excepting a few hundred Lepchas and Limbus' (see O'Malley 1907) The legend below a map of British Sikkim drawn by Captain W S Sherwille in 1852 states 'this mountainous country from 1500 to 4000 feet above sea level is inhabited by a warlike beardless race termed Limboos (cf Subba 1999 35-36) Another British archival map

showing the approximate race distribution of Sikkim in 1892 demarcates the ethnic settlements of the Lepchas, the Bhutias, the Limbus and the Paharias (Nepalis) in Sikkim and the Darjeeling Hills A statement printed on the map clearly stresses ethnic-settlement 'Line north of which Paharias are not allowed to settle' Limbus inter-married freely with the Lepchas and the Rai's in Sikkim until an imperial law, enforced in 1913, checked ethnic miscegenation by regulating marriage among Lepchas and Bhutias This law contoured a preference that the Lepchas and Bhutias should marry within their own communities while prohibiting the marriage of Lepchas and Bhutias with the Tsongs and Nepalis in Sikkim [7] This law was enforced until the 1940s

The progressive Hinduisation of Limbus drew a boundary between them and the Lepchas-Bhutias (who were treated as outcastes by Hindus due to their pork- and beef-eating habits and kinship practices such as polygamy) The Limbus occupied a Shudra position in the caste hierarchy of Nepal and Sikkim (A C Sinha 1981 194, Subba 1989 53) In the 19th century, to improve their social standing, the Hinduised Limbus distanced themselves from their earlier animist identities while some converted to Christianity in the late 20th century By becoming Hindus, the Limbus asserted the superiority of having a caste identity to the Lepchas-Bhutias, while by becoming Christians they tried to modernise themselves In the late 20th century, the Limbus campaigned for a 'tribal' identity by emphasising their indigenous and animistic identities Currently, Hinduisation, retribalisation and westernisation are occurring simultaneously

How exactly have Limbus suffered after being defined as Nepali? The contemporary Nepali category includes groups that migrated from East Nepal such as the Rai, the Magar, the Yakha the Khombu and the Mechi, which have clear migration histories between eastern Nepal and Sikkim The other Nepali groups such as the Gorkha the Newar, the Bahun, the Kshettri and the Sunwar migrated from other parts of Nepal The fragmentation of the Nepali category into four groups, namely, the Other Backward Classes (Gurungs, Rai's, Magars, Sunwars and Newars), Scheduled Castes (Kamis, Damais, Lohars, Majhis and Sarkis), Scheduled Tribes (Limbus and Tamangs) and a General category (Bahuns and Kshettris) challenges all imaginings of a unitary Nepali category In the past, the Nepali language affirmed Nepali identity, and its status as a *lingua franca* and national language in 1992 reflects their ascendancy The contemporary articulation of ethnic subjectivity has undermined the linguistic solidarity of the Nepali in Sikkim, as ethnic groups instrumentally emphasise the uniqueness of their language, revive it in their everyday life, reinstate forgotten scripts, recover their literature

and record their oral history to claim historicity These identity claims are intimately connected with their survival and struggles over land, forests, education, employment, justice and dignity in post-independent India

The Nepali category was constructed by the colonial administrative discourse However, Subba (1999 2) attributes them to the theocratic rule of the Namgyal dynasty, which did not recognise the cultural, linguistic, and religious heterogeneity within the Nepali category and treated them as migrants I disagree with him on this, as many Namgyal rulers consciously took consorts from ethnic groups other than the Lepchas, Tibetans and Drukpas to garner their support, Subba acknowledges these marital alliances After the 1826 Lepcha rebellion at Kabi, the influence of the Lepchas in Sikkim's administration waned considerably (Sprigg 1995) The genealogies of many families indicate marital exchanges between the Lepchas and Bhutias, Lepchas and Limbus, Limbus and Rai's, Bhutias and Tibetans, Bhutias and other Buddhists such as Sherpas and Tamangs, and among members of other groups generically designated as Nepali Politically also, the Namgyal rulers acknowledged the differences between the Newars, the Gorkhas, the Limbus and the Magars, and accorded them differential status [8]

The ethnic boundaries and hostilities between the Lepchas-Bhutias and the Paharias/Gorkhas are not recent, but historically can be traced to the recurring invasions of Sikkim by the Gorkha rulers of Nepal during the 18th and the 19th centuries (see Dolma and Namgyal 1908 49-54) that necessitated British intervention as peace-makers into the region These hostilities were aggravated by 19th century imperial policies that sponsored *en masse* settlement of Nepalis in the region in order to increase revenue earnings and counter the pro-Tibetan leanings of the Lepchas and the Bhutias (see Risley 1894 xxi, A K J Singh 1988 204)

Tracing the roots of these ethnic categories in the past, one finds that during the 1891 Census of Sikkim its population was ethnically differentiated into 13 groups (see Risley 1894 24) However, after 1891, the imperial administration delineated four groups, namely, the Lepchas-Bhutias, the Limbus, the Nepalis and the others In 1915, when the land revenue rates were finalised, the imperial regime differentiated between only the Lepchas-Bhutias and the Nepalis (see Anon 1915 2) From 1931 onwards, they progressively categorised all groups, excluding the Lepchas-Bhutias, as Nepali If colonial policies protected and transformed the Lepchas and the Bhutias into the indigenous groups of Sikkim, then other policies discriminated against the Limbus, who were indigenous to Sikkim, by treating them as Nepali immigrants Within Nepal, the state extended protection to the Limbus by enforcing a law, in 1901, prohibiting the alienation of Limbu lands to non-Limbus in eastern Nepal (cf Subba

1999 40) In some ways this law was a precursor of the landmark Land Revenue Order No 1 discussed later in this section

The British Raj ended in 1947, and the Namgyal rulers of Sikkim adopted religious criteria to categorise people into Buddhists, Hindus and Christians in the 1951 Census The May agreement of 1951 recognised the special status of the Limbus by incorporating provisions for protecting their identity and rights as a Nepali group of Sikkimese origin and two seats were reserved for them in the council The Sikkim citizenship order and the parity formula were implemented during this period On the whole, during the 1960s and 1970s, the Namgyal dynasty stressed the need to preserve the privileges of the Lepchas-Bhutias as indigenous people and reinforced their ethnic-nationalist belonging and migrant identities of the Nepalis At the first general meeting of the Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limbu Chumlung, in July 1973, a resolution was passed 'Chong/Tsong are not Nepali but one of the indigenous groups of Sikkim' (cf Chemojong 1973 34-40)

In 1975, Sikkim became a democratic state of the Republic of India and the Lepchas-Bhutias blame the Nepalis for this merger The merger opened the floodgates for ethnic and cultural resurgence of the diverse groups constituting the Nepali category The Government of India rejected the demands of the Limbus for preferential entitlements and ST status They were merged into the Nepali category in 1975 (Kazi 1993 220-23) In 1978, only the Lepchas and the Bhutias were recognised as Scheduled Tribes and twelve seats were reserved in the legislative assembly to safeguard their political interests and quotas allocated in government employment and educational institutions Special safeguards were justified in order to protect the 'tribal' interests of the Lepchas and the Bhutias who were rendered a political minority with the incorporation of Sikkim into India However, no special provisions were made for the Damai, Kami, Lohar, Majhi and Sarki who were recognised as Scheduled Castes in 1978 The Nepalis would elect political representatives for the seventeen general seats

In the 1981 Census, Sikkim's population was administratively re-classified into Scheduled Tribes (Lepchas-Bhutias), Scheduled Castes, Nepali and Others, in accordance with the all-India pattern In the early 1980s, some Nepali politicians filed a petition in the Supreme Court of India challenging the special status of the Lepchas-Bhutias On 10 February 1993, the Supreme Court delivered a landmark judgement upholding the reservation of the Bhutia-Lepcha seats and one seat for the *sangha* in the Sikkim legislative assembly Realising the benefits of tribal status, the Limbus aggressively campaigned for Scheduled Tribe status in the late 1980s Unlike the Lepchas-Bhutias whose indigeneity

was affirmed in colonial discourse and post-colonial laws, the Limbus had to gather political support and pressurise the state government of Sikkim and the government of India for such recognition In 1990, during Shri V P Singh's tenure as the Prime Minister, they were recognised as an Other Backward Class with the Rai, the Magar, the Gurung, the Tamang and the Bhujel groups The Scheduled Tribe Order of 2002 restored their indigenous status The identification of a group as 'tribal' clearly bears the imprint of state policies and reflects their relative bargaining power and aspirations for social mobility

The Nepalis stress their contribution towards developing Sikkim's agrarian economy and shaping the contours of its land Today, they can be found in all the sectors of Sikkim's economy, and constitute the political majority of contemporary Sikkim Economically, they have succeeded in rising from the bottom of the agrarian hierarchy A brief discussion of the discrimination suffered by the Nepalis (and Limbus as Nepalis) under Land Revenue Order No 1, lessee landlordism, Sikkim subject status, and the parity formula indicates the historical and politico-economic basis of the identity of the Nepali in Sikkim

(1) Both Land Revenue Order No 1 (issued by Charles Bell in May 1917) and Tashi Namgyal's proclamation on North Sikkim (30 August, 1937) protect and safeguard Lepcha and Bhutia interests in land [9] Under notification No 5093/F dated 13 April 1948, the opening of new lands was prohibited in Sikkim, which checked Nepali settlement considerably, although by then the Nepali groups had outnumbered the indigenous population in Sikkim These laws prohibit the sale, mortgage or subletting of lands belonging to a Lepcha or Bhutia person to any Nepali person These laws safeguard the economic interests of the Lepchas and the Bhutias while framing the parameters of their indigeneity and identity After considerable debate in the mid-1980s neither of these laws was revoked

(2) Under the lessee landlord system introduced by J C White in 1888, the landlords collected revenue on behalf of the king, and the tenants were at their complete mercy since they functioned as magistrates The landlords encouraged the settlement of Nepali migrants to increase both revenue collection and to extract free labour In 1915, two sets of land revenue rates were introduced in Sikkim Until the abolition of landlordism in 1949, almost half the landlords and revenue collectors were Nepalis and the rest were either Bhutias or Lepchas Nonetheless, the lease of land given to a Nepali landlord was for 10 years, and to a Bhutia or a Lepcha landlord, 15 years (Rose 1978 215) Numerous land dispute cases available in the Sikkim state archives reiterate the idea that the 'Bhutia and the Lepcha cultivators are the sons

of the soil and therefore entitled to preferential tenurial rights and differential land revenue rates' [10] In 1954, the state government issued notification No 3082/L R enforcing a lower ceiling in land ownership of 5 acres and an upper ceiling through restrictions on purchase of land for persons owning more that 20 acres of land The Cultivators Protection Act of 1985 affirmed the tenurial rights of the tenants and existing cultivators and assured parity in land revenue rates (Lama 2001 45)

(3) Sikkim subject status epitomises the indigeneity of the Lepchas and the Bhutias by reinforcing the migrant identities of the Nepali groups Under the Sikkim subject regulations of 1961, the early Nepali settlers who paid land revenue were recognised as legal settlers and given Sikkim subject certificates (Rao 1978 20-21) The Bhutia and the Lepcha were automatically granted citizenship irrespective of their status as owners or cultivators of land A large proportion of Nepalis were denied Sikkim subject status since they were labourers (Sinha 1975 61, Datta 1994 77-78) According to the 1975 Sikkim Citizenship Order, 'every person who immediately before 26 April 1975 was a Sikkim subject under the Sikkim subject regulations of 1961 shall be deemed to have become a citizen of India on that day' In addition to the Nepali, there is a large section of population of Indian origin residing and working in Sikkim (such as Marwari, Bengali) since the late 19th century, who do not possess Sikkim subject certificates Living in Sikkim over a period and being part of Sikkimese culture, is not sufficient for claiming Sikkimese identity and belonging

(4) The politics of the parity system defines the ethnic politics of Sikkim (Sinha 1981 195) Following its implementation, the Nepali groups were equated with the Lepcha and Bhutia groups in the matter of the distribution of seats in the State legislative assembly Until 1979, the Nepali groups, who comprise 75 per cent of Sikkim's population, were equated with the Lepcha and the Bhutia groups that comprise 20 per cent of Sikkim's population A modified parity system continues in the form of twelve reserved seats for the Lepchas and the Bhutias and one seat for the representative of the Buddhist monasteries in the Sikkim legislative assembly Currently, the Limbus and the Tamangs are demanding seats in the legislative assembly from ST quota (leading to the decimation of the Lepcha-Bhutia share) or by increasing the number of seats in the state assembly to give them separate representation (a dilution of Lepcha-Bhutia power)

Almost every community in Sikkim is signalling the presence of its distinct language, script, culture, dance and music, and circulating a trope of economic backwardness to claim rights and entitlements I conclude this section by stressing the importance of language in Sikkim's ethnicity

The deed of the Darjeeling Grant (1835) is written in the Lepcha language and, until 1850s, the Lepcha and the Tibetan languages were used by Sikkim's administration Even the British political officers of Sikkim were required to be competent and had to undergo language proficiency tests in the Tibetan language In 1911, Sir Charles Bell took an examination in the Nepali language and justified it by stating 'that seventy five per cent of Sikkim's population is Nepali and efficient administration required competence in Nepali' [11] This argument signals the reasons for the shift to the Nepali language as the language of administration in Sikkim in early 20th century The increasing importance of the Nepali groups is reflected in the changes in the place names and with the Nepali names gaining importance over the original Lepcha or Bhutia names (Waddell 1891) Today, the *lingua franca* of Sikkim is Nepali and it was accorded the status of an Indian national language in 1992 The Nepali language has served as a source of identity and brought about the closer integration of the Nepali community in the diaspora (Hutt 1997 116) as it serves as the mode of inter-ethnic communication

The diverse groups within the Nepali category have languages and scripts of their own Initially, the state government recognised four languages, namely, Lepcha, Bhutia, Limbu and Nepali, and these were taught in the schools at the higher secondary level, but other groups are demanding a similar facility Today, the official weekly of Sikkim, the *Sikkim Herald* is printed in thirteen languages The promotion and revitalisation of linguistic diversity is evident in the recent release of primers, dictionaries, and magazines Language has been an important unifying force especially in situations where communities have been sub-divided by occupation and religion Uniqueness of a language and its script has acquired significance such that they have become a mark of cultural uniqueness 'without a language of one's own, there is no distinct culture, and hence, there can be no people/nation' (cf Karlsson 2000 226) Where there are no scripts, they are being invented and where scripts were modified, a fetish for originality is evident In 2002, I witnessed a heated argument between two Lepcha ideologues, Lyangsong Tamsang of Kalimpong and Ugen Shipmoo of Sikkim (who has successfully computerised the Lepcha script by making some minor modification) These modifications were totally unacceptable to the other Lepcha ideologues of Kalimpong, while the Lepchas of Sikkim justified them as being essential for wider dissemination and printing of literature in the Lepcha language Despite such heightened ethnic-linguistic consciousness, very people use their own language in daily discourse or even manage to read their own scripts, this reflects linguistic symbolism rather than linguistic proficiency

Despite retribalisation and a common origin in Nepal, the Nepali language and a common subjective experience of exploitation under the Namgyal dynasty and colonial rule does provide some basis of political consciousness to the Nepalis in Sikkim Recognising these aspects, A C Sinha advocated the use of a new terminology 'Nepamul' for Indians of Nepali origin (INO) in order to distinguish them from other Nepali persons of Nepal who come as seasonal agricultural labourers in the region (Sinha and Subba 2003 11) A recent suggestion of the Gorkha National Liberation Front of Darjeeling that 'Gorkhas' be used for Nepalis of Indian origin has not yet gained any acceptability among other Nepali groups of Northeast India Ghising even went so far as to suggest that their language be termed Gorkhali rather than Nepali The following section relates the particular case of tribes of Sikkim to the colonial perception and post-colonial discourse about tribes and their identification in India

II
Identity, Identification of Tribal People and Indigeneity

The concept of 'tribe' has generated much debate in colonial and post-colonial discourses, yet its contours lack explicit definition, despite its popular use in the discourses of social anthropologists, administrators, lawyers, tribal activists, politicians, and the government and international agencies There has been more concern with the identification of tribes than with their definition in India Popular discourse uses terms such as tribes, Scheduled Tribes, indigenous people, *vanjati*, *adivasi* and *jana* interchangeably Nevertheless, each evokes different connotations and genealogies of use and representation in India and in Sikkim, in particular

Social anthropologists argue that the concept of 'tribe' is a colonial construction (Xaxa 1999b, 2005, Karlsson 2000), necessitated by the need to classify people into categories for administrative purposes and influenced by the work of imperial scholar-administrators in India such as Elwin and Risley and by anthropologists' usage (such as that of Ghurye) The East India Company officers initiated social research in India by collecting information on religion, customs, agriculture, trade and population These practices were later institutionalised in the census, gazetteers and ethnographic surveys (Cohn 1987 248) The first ethnographic surveys of India refer to hill and forest tribes (*vanjatis*) thereby emphasising regional habitat, economic and political marginalisation in an evolutionary conception of tribes However, not all tribes live in forests and all forest-dwellers are not tribes Indian tribal communities are distinguished by religion and culture from the caste

groups Many 19th and 20th century monographs on India habitually confused tribe with caste, although caste is a different kind of social category (Béteille 1998 187) The 1901 Census of India used 'animism' as the criteria to distinguish between castes and tribes Tribes were defined in opposition to caste, as lacking caste attributes – hierarchy, purity and pollution, kinship-based, technologically primitive, economically homogenous, and politically segmentary groups, practicing animism, possessing distinctive languages and placed at the margins of the state control Post-colonial ethnographic studies have debunked representations of tribes being 'an isolated, self-contained and primitive social formation', since tribes and castes have coexisted in proximity with other social formations (see Sundar 1997 16)

State recognition has given tribal identity a definition that they lacked in the past Many groups became castes and ceased to be tribes in colonial India while the reverse process of castes becoming tribes is evident in the post-colonial period Historically, many groups used the census operations of the colonial India to claim upper caste status or caste identities (see Cohn 1987 Ch 10) Ethnographically, there are instances of groups becoming castes and outcastes and later reclaiming Scheduled Tribe status A famous example is that of the Rajbansis whose members have Scheduled Caste status in contemporary West Bengal, although Rajbansis living in North Bengal staked claims to Kshatriya caste status in the late 19th century and objected to their census classification as Rajbansi-Koch, who were classified as tribal groups (Risley 1905 [1969 reprint] 72-75, 126, Karlsson 2000 223) In order to pass off as Kshatriyas, some Rajbansis distanced themselves from the economically backward members of the community and even hid their background and passed off as Bengalis However, by the end of the 20th century, in order to claim the benefits of affirmative action, many Rajbansis of North Bengal were reverting to their 'original' identity as forest-dwellers, demanding ST status and a separate state, Kamtapuri (Nandi 2003 148-53) [12]

In 1935, despite the circulation of 'aboriginal tribes' or the autochthones in discourse, the British Raj and the government of independent India decided to use the term 'Scheduled Tribes' In 1991, the Anthropological Survey of India (see K S Singh 1994) identified about 461 tribal groups (varying in size, geographical spread, mode of livelihood, and social organisation) and several other groups are clamouring for 'tribal' recognition, special entitlements, reservations, and protections Article 366 (25) refers to Scheduled Tribes as those communities who are scheduled in accordance with Article 342 of the Constitution according to which, 'the Scheduled Tribes are the tribes or

tribal communities or part of or groups within these tribes and tribal communities which have been declared as such by the President through a public notification' (Jain 2000 271-72) The Scheduled Tribe status is an administrative classification using the criterion of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and economic backwardness Groups may possess the so-called tribal attributes, nonetheless not beget the Scheduled Tribe status The list of Scheduled Tribes varies from state to state, and groups classified as castes in one state may be classified as tribes in a neighbouring state tribal identities are contentious

The transformation of a group into a Scheduled Tribe confers special entitlements to the members of that group, which range from reservation of seats in the Legislative Assembly to quotas in government employment and educational institutions, and various other concessions Other special provisions include the right of Scheduled Tribes to use their own language for education, and to profess their own religious faith and customary practices The Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Indian Constitution contain special provisions for protecting the tribes and administration of tribal dominated areas There is a need to critically examine the political and administrative process around the recognition and conferment of tribal status to groups Recognition as a Scheduled Tribe indicates the group's political strength and its power to influence the regime of representation in order to claim preferential entitlements and resources Being tribal does not necessarily indicate indigeneity, oppression or subaltern status but signifies political assertion and empowerment

The term *adivasi* – meaning original inhabitants – was first used in the Chotanagpur region of Bihar in the 1930s In the historical context, the term denotes communities lying outside the state/society who were eventually colonised by the British Raj and brought under direct or indirect rule (Heredia 2000 1522) Historians have documented the oppression, subjugation, colonisation of *adivasis* by moneylenders and the colonial state, and narrated stories of their resistance and rebellion (Hardiman 1987, Sundar 1997) Today, *adivasi* has achieved a saliency in the discourse of tribal leaders and academia such that it connotes the marginality, dispossession and subjugation of tribal people rather than necessarily original inhabitation (Hardiman 1987) However, there are regional exceptions In Bengal, the Rabhas prefer being termed tribal, while using *adivasis* to connote the tribal groups that migrated from central India to work on the tea plantations The Lepchas and Bhutias of Sikkim too prefer being tribal

Any question of colonisation and subjugation of tribal people is problematic in the Sikkimese context My ethnographic research in Sikkim indicates that hierarchies can emerge even among tribes, with groups ranking each other and there are dominant-subordinate partners in tribal/ethnic alliances such as the Lepchas-Bhutias Many other social groups classified today as Nepalis in Sikkim suffered under the imperial regime, while protective measures were enforced to prevent the alienation of lands belonging to the Lepchas-Bhutias and check their political marginalisation in Sikkim Poverty, economic and political subordination are not distinctive of tribal communities since other non-tribal groups such as the dalits were marginalised equally in history Nevertheless, the stigma of untouchability surpasses the stigma of tribal status in Sikkim and in India My informants in Sikkim stressed the social unacceptability of any union between a Scheduled Tribe person and a Scheduled Caste person and gave several examples of romances that were socially unacceptable and ended in heartbreak Unlike the tribal people, the dalits cannot claim territoriality as a basis of their identity, nonetheless deterritorialised groups do have their own localities (Appadurai 1995 222) The proliferation of SC housing societies, including government housing in urban India, have made it possible for the dalits to assert themselves locally and make themselves socially visible in the landscape

Territorial affiliation and linguistic and cultural distinctiveness have legitimised tribal claims in both national and international contexts Globally the tribal people are being referred to as the indigenous people, with this term acquiring political correctness as it encapsulates the conquest, subjugation, and decimation of native people such as in Australia and the Americas This term was popularised after the declaration of 1993 as the year of the indigenous people However, there are theoretical and practical difficulties of such a conflation of tribes as indigenous people in India People designated as tribal are not necessarily indigenous while groups identified as indigenous may not necessarily be tribal in the Indian context Any blanket generalisation of tribes as 'indigenous people' is problematic and misleading in the Indian case especially given the migration histories of some tribal groups, while other groups (castes) are indigenous to the region

What cut-off point in India's history should we use to determine who are indigenous and who are the migrants? Given the waves of migration of people of different languages, races, cultures, and religions dating back to several centuries, any demarcation is contentious The question of original settlers is contentious and problematic, as migration discourses mix up settlement within a region and the country (Sikkim and India)

Can this question of indigeneity be reduced to the time period of settlement?

The regime of representation of the tribal as the indigene has acquired a valency that cannot be ignored Xaxa (1999b) makes two important points (i) that tribal identity as the indigenous is a matter of pride, and (ii) that it is associated with rights and privileges The colonial regime, and later the government of independent India, has played a critical role in transforming tribal people into the indigenous Recovering history, circulating historic myths, and sanctifying historic sites as repositories of collective memory is critical for sustaining indigenous identities Identity discourses on indigeneity are instrumentally using history as a Malinowskian charter for justifying their present This explains the importance of the myth of the blood-brotherhood treaty at Kabi for affirming indigeneity and the idea of *Lhomontsongsum* (the ethnic alliance of Lepcha, Bhutia and Limbus) The Limbu anthropologist Subba (1999 112) argues that the *Lhomontsongsum* was solemnised by Phuntsog Namgyal in 1641 to neutralise Lepcha and Limbu opposition and garner their support for the kingdom of Sikkim, while Sinha (1975 14, 1981 197) argues that this myth was circulated in the 1980s by the Bhutias to forge a '*Lhomontsong*' commonwealth against the Nepalis, although this unity could not be sustained due to religious and cultural differences among the constituent groups However, according to other historical accounts and oral history I collected during my fieldwork, the blood-brotherhood treaty was solemnised at Kabi between Tekong Tek, a powerful Lepcha shaman and Khye Bumsa, the Tibetan Prince of the Minyak dynasty of Kham, and not by Phutsog Namgyal

According to the Sikkim Bhutia Lepcha Association and the Lepcha associations, the ethnic alliance at Kabi was enacted in the 14th century between the Lepchas and the Bhutias and materially represented by sacred stones raised into the ground They identify Kabi in North Sikkim as the sacred site where a blood-brotherhood treaty was solemnised between Tekong Tek and Khye Bumsa as the representatives respectively of the Lepchas and the Bhutias in 1366, thereby legitimising Bhutia migration and settlement into Sikkim, their version does not mention the Limbus The witnessing stones of the Kabi sacred grove materially and symbolically deny indigeneity to other groups that do not possess such signifiers of indigeneity Some versions of the Kabi myth mention the sacrifice of a Limbu person that transformed these three groups into a family, with 'Bhutias as the father', the 'Lepchas as the mother' and 'Limbus as the children' During the 1990s, several memoranda of the Limbu association cited this myth about the sacrifice of a Limbu at Kabi as evidence of their indigenous status and pressed for

the Scheduled Tribe status [13] Incidentally, Kabi was the primary site of my fieldwork in Sikkim and it is predominantly a Lepcha-Bhutia settlement where the Nepalis were settled in the early 20th century Oral accounts of Kabi villagers do mention the sacrifice of a Limbu, although hardly any Limbus reside in Kabi or its adjoining areas The only Limbus I discovered at Kabi were seasonal agricultural labourers from Nepal who come to harvest cardamom

The sense of belonging is a politically negotiated process, and emplacement is not merely the outcome of dwelling in a place On what grounds are the Lepchas-Bhutias-Limbus more tribal than the other groups residing in Sikkim? The Lepchas, Bhutias and Limbus equally have a history of settlement in the geographical region of contemporary Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal From the late 17th century, many groups such as the Magars, Limbus, Rai and Yakha find casual mention in the history of Sikkim written by the ruling family (Dolma and Namgyal 1908 21, 30-32, 37-40, 53-54), and British travelogues of mid-19th century state that the Limbu, Mechi, and Magar are indigenous to Sikkim (Hooker 1891 94, 285) Locality mediates ethnic-nationalism, but ethnic-nationalist origins also mediate locality, otherwise, the identities of the Nepalis as migrants into Sikkim would have been effaced and Limbu indigeneity would have been a foregone conclusion This explains why the Gorkha National Liberation Front of the Darjeeling Hills is demanding an autonomous state and pressing for a shift in semantics from Nepali to Gorkha, as the term Nepali indicates Nepali citizenship of Nepal 'we are not here in India in accordance with the 1950 Indo-Nepal agreement, but we have been here in this land since the 12th century' (cf Baruah 2005 199)

Like other essentialist identities, indigeneity has become a powerful tool that is being deployed by tribal people for political mobilisation and self-affirmation Ideas of territoriality (rights over territory due to prior settlement) and indigeneity have been conflated in ethnic-nationalist discourses of tribal people and encouraged demands for autonomy and secession, although the two ideas are distinct Post-colonial India has witnessed several ethnic-nationalist assertions of tribal people including violent insurgencies in Northeast India, shattering any romantic imaginings of peace-loving docile tribal people lost in their own worlds There have been several instances of conflict-induced displacement of tribes and other groups in Northeast India Kukis and Nagas have been displaced from Manipur, the Bengalis, from Assam, and the Chakmas, from Arunachal Pradesh The Kukis are demanding a separate hill district in Manipur, while the Nagas are demanding the inclusion of Naga

inhabited areas of Manipur into Nagaland and greater autonomy from India

III
Icons of Alternative Knowledge and the Emergence of Political Subjectivity

The myth of the 'savage tribe' released by the modern mind has been resurrected in the postmodern post-colonial period under a new *avatar* as the iconic custodian of alternative knowledge Those modern fictions have become truths firing the political consciousness while providing resources for oppositional and identity politics Undoubtedly, these representations have subverted the epistemic basis of their domination and dehumanisation

In many parts of the world, indigenous people perceive their knowledge to be part of their cultural identity, and political movements have incorporated this as an integral part of their discourses (Strang 1997) Tribal claims of an organic link between their cosmologies, cultures, and territory and the environment were foregrounded in many resource-related struggles during the 1980s and 1990s (such as Narmada Bachao Aandolan) and continue to be powerful symbols of identity and instruments of political empowerment During the Rathongchu movement, the Lepchas-Bhutias and the Buddhist activists asserted that, as the indigenous people of Sikkim, they are the custodians of Sikkim's sacred landscape, which would be defiled by state-sponsored development projects such as the Rathongchu hydel project and the settlement of Indian migrant workers

The process of the Hinduisation of tribal people into castes and their assimilation into Indian mainstream has been reversed in post-colonial India with an accent on retribalisation and affirmation of tribal identities With the emergence of an educated middle class among the tribal people (many of them are beneficiaries of reservation) some even are 'indigenous ethnologists' engaged in reconstructing their identities Ethnology is essential for claiming an *ethnos*, hence, every community in Sikkim is discovering something unique about its identity and claiming special privileges for its protection The late 1980s witnessed a cultural revival of the tribe in Sikkim,[14] with the Lepchas, Bhutias, Limbus (and some other groups) establishing tribal associations and reintroducing their languages, reinstating their forgotten rituals and giving status to their shamans Other aspects such as dance, music, craft skills and cuisine were reinstated to affirm cultural specificity and reclaim an ethno-nationalist belonging

Many Lepchas mentioned the stigma associated with their identities as uncivilised forest-dwellers, which had made it difficult for them to take pride in their identity, while permitting the Bhutias to dominate them The process of the Bhutianisation of the Lepchas captured their status-predicament and indicated their individual mobility strategies This involved the abandonment and forgetting of Lepcha culture, language and rituals by the adoption of Bhutia identities, Buddhist culture and Bhutia life-styles The spread of Buddhism, inter-marriage between the communities, and similar legal status with the state had made this transformation possible During the 1990s the Bhutianisation of the Lepchas was replaced by the remembering to be a Lepcha The Lepcha ideologue P T Lepcha of Darjeeling Hills emphasised, 'being Lepcha is not just about being born as one Lepchaness has to be expressed, affirmed, and demonstrated by one's participation in community activities' In the early 1990s, politically conscious Lepchas-Bhutias revived many rituals in order to assert their indigeneity, affirming their symbolic connections with Sikkim's landscape, and politically staking a claim over its resources as the 'sons of the soil' to oppose the ascendancy of the numerically and politically Nepali majority

The struggle to shape culture is often a battle over power (Cohen 1993 148) Rituals such as the worship of mountains and lakes, first-fruit offerings, worship of nature, rain, plants and agricultural land, that were earlier a source of stigma for the nature-worshipping and forest-dwelling Lepchas, were consciously revived to assert indigeneity and subvert dominant ideologies that dehumanised them Their forest-dwelling identity is an essential weapon for demanding rights over the forest and the fields With their ongoing opposition to the implementation of the Teesta project, the Lepcha are emerging as the primordial environmentalists of the Sikkim Himalayas

Indigeneity is intrinsically a sign of neither subalterneity nor resistance, but an assertive political statement The idea of a defiled sacred landscape was the chief argument used by the Lepchas, Bhutias and Buddhist activists protesting against the implementation of Rathongchu hydroelectric project in West Sikkim during 1993-97 The activists argued that the project infringed their indigenous rights in land and violated Article 371F of the Indian Constitution under which the kingdom of Sikkim was incorporated into India in 1975 Articulation of Lepcha and Bhutia identity and indigeneity in the landscape did not begin with the battles around the Rathongchu hydel project nor have they ended with its cancellation in 1997 The inclusion of the Limbu and the Tamang in the Scheduled Tribe category in 2002 has evoked bitter

opposition from the Lepchas and the Bhutias who resent the dilution of their indigeneity and are not prepared to share their entitlements with other groups

On 26 June 2003, the Sikkim Lepcha Youth Association and other Lepcha leaders submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister of Sikkim demanding protection for the Lepchas as the Most Primitive Tribe

> The Lepcha community, which represents the indigenous and primitive tribe of Sikkim, are politically, socially, economically and educationally more backward than the other communities of Sikkim The Lepchas of Sikkim who are the indigenous people of Sikkim are having low levels of literacy, declining or stagnant population and other agricultural level of technology and economically backward than other communities of Sikkim Unless special care is given to protect and preserve this endangered human species there is every likelihood that Lepcha people will vanish from the Himalayas one day, as these people cannot adapt in such competitive world (*Weekend Review,* Gangtok, 4 July 2003)

The Sikkim Bhutia and Lepcha Association led a delegation of Bhutia and Lepcha protestors to Delhi and gave a memorandum to the President of India on 29 September 2003 In anger, the protestors challenged the merger of Sikkim into India They have submitted many other memorandums and sent delegations to the concerned authorities asserting that, under Article 371f, preferential entitlements were given to the Bhutias and Lepchas, and not to them as Scheduled Tribes The Sikkim government has currently proposed to the Central government that the strength of the state legislative assembly be increased from 32 to 40 seats in order to give the Limbus and the Tamangs the benefit of their tribal status In the 2001 Census, the Limbus and the Tamangs were enumerated as part of the Nepali population Hence, these groups are demanding the conduct of a fresh census recognising their Scheduled Tribes status in order to ascertain their exact numerical strength and thereby legitimise their demand for a proportionate share of reserved seats for their political representatives, jobs in government employment, and seats in educational institutions [15] In 2005, the Lepchas were recognised as 'Most Primitive Tribe' by the Government of Sikkim while some Nepali groups, such as the Khambu Rai, Gurung, Mangar, Sunwar, Thami, Dewan and Bhujel are pressurising the state government and the National Commission of Backward Classes to include them in the list of Scheduled Tribes [16]

Conclusion

In this paper, the politics of tribal identity has been analysed in conjunction with the historic changes and the economic development of the eastern Himalayas in the last two centuries Discourses indicate that tribal identities depend on exclusions and inclusions, expressions of territoriality, indigeneity and belonging in the landscape, and their recognition by the state The continuing role of the state is explicit in the structuring of identities, allocation of entitlements to Scheduled Tribes, and its response to ethnic-nationalist assertions and movements for political autonomy Claims of tribal indigeneity recreate homelands of ethnic-nationalist belonging while denying others a belonging in this landscape The rediscovery of 'indigenous religions', shamans, and sacred sites do not merely represent tribal cultural revival, on the contrary, they reflect the flowering of tribal political consciousness among the Lepchas, the Bhutias and the Limbus Culture is instrumentally being wielded as a weapon to politically affirm the 'tribal' self and challenge the domination of others by reconstructing identities in history to claim a historicity History, religion and language emerge as important symbolic sources for furthering ethnic-national claims of tribal identity and indigeneity These expressions of reflexive agency are certainly not unique or restricted to Sikkim The struggle to be recognised as 'Scheduled Tribe' in Sikkim indicates that tribal identity is no longer a sign and symbol of subalternity but political consciousness The Limbu were politically marginalised in Sikkim and could not bargain effectively with either the colonial powers or the post-colonial government for protective laws It is only recently that they have succeeded in gaining Scheduled Tribe status and they are campaigning for rights and entitlements associated with it

Much recent work outlines the embeddedness of the constructions of the 'tribe' as part of the colonial project and continuities in the constructivist policies of the post-colonial Indian development project (Sengupta 1986, Baviskar 1995, Karlsson 2000) The tribal certificate issued by the government is no longer a mark of stigma, but prized and priced in the market Paradoxically, while the post-colonial ethnologists and historians are busy debunking essentialisms connected with tribal identities, the tribal people and the 'indigenous anthropologists' have appropriated the essentialisms of being 'primitive', 'shy innocent and other-worldly', 'nature-worshippers', 'indigenous', 'hunters and gatherers', and 'politically marginalised groups', in order to reconstruct identity discourses which can galvanise public and international support for their resource-related struggles not merely over water, forests and

fields, but also over seats in legislatures, jobs in the administrative services including the police and the judiciary, and seats in Indian universities, elite engineering, medical and management institutes If these shifting terrains signal the political constituency of the tribe in India, then the market circulation of 'fake tribal certificates' reminds us that tribal identities need not necessarily be original, but can easily be purchased as commodities

Notes

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1 Although interlinked in concrete contexts, scholars distinguish between 'identity politics' – the top-down formal institutional arena of administration, organisations, parties and the government for affirming identities – and 'politics of identity' – the bottom-down process of individual and social articulation for power (Hill and Wilson 2003 1-2)
2 In 1835, the British annexed the Darjeeling Hills from Sikkim and merged them into the Bengal State of Calcutta Presidency (Wangyal 2002)
3 The contestations and fluidity of identity explains the accent on impressionism
4 The *History of Sikkim* gives 1642 (the Water-Horse year) as the date of the coronation (Dolma and Namgyal 1908 17), while the most popular source in the English language cites 1641 as the date (see Waddell 1894 50) According to the Tibetan astrological calendar, the Water-Horse year is stated to be 1646 (Interview Dr Rigzin Ngodup Dokhampa, the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Gangtok, Sikkim, 2002)
5 The title *Subba* was given to them by Prithviraj Narayan Shah in Nepal (Pradhan 1991 82)
6 Source Interviews with the famous linguist Keith Sprigg, England, 2003-04
7 Proclamation issued on 21 July 1913 by the British Political Officer of Sikkim (Sikkim State Archives, Gangtok)
8 The Newar group retained an elite position in Sikkim, as in Nepal, and they formed the largest section among the Nepali landlords
9 The first Political Officer of Sikkim J C White is blamed for encouraging Nepali settlement However, in the Sikkim State Archives, I found a document dated 2 January 1897 signed by White prohibiting the Lepcha-Bhutia Kazis' *mandals* from selling any land to Nepalis without the council's permission
10 Cf File No 2 of Serial No 18 of 1932 of General Department in Sikkim State Archives, Gangtok
11 Refer to Examination of Mr C A Bell Political Officer in Nepalese-Khas Khura, Foreign Department, General B, Proceedings February 1911, National Archives, New Delhi

12 A similar process is evident in the Rabhas of Bengal who were initially classified as a Scheduled Caste in the 1931 Census, but redefined themselves as Scheduled Tribes in the 1959 Census (Karlsson 2000 202)

13 This is documented in memoranda submitted by Akhil Sikkim Kirat Limbu Chumlung to the Chief minister, the Prime Minister and the President of India (refer to 'Lhomentsong treaty revived', *Sikkim Observer*, 24 October-5 November 1988, 'Limbus demand Scheduled Tribes status', *Sikkim Observer*, 14 July, and 'Limbu Memorandum submitted to the President Full text', *Sikkim Observer*, 28 July 1990)

14 Some of these measures can in fact be traced to Hope Cooke's efforts to revive Sikkimese (Lepcha-Bhutia) culture during the 1970s (Cooke 1980 192)

15 'PM lends an ear to Sikkim', *Statesman*, Gangtok, 4 December 2005

16 *Backward commission to study demand for tribal status in Sikkim*, Gangtok, 16 December 2005 http //news webindia123 com/news/showdetails asp?id=193299&cat =India

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A Diasporic Indian Community: Re-Imagining Punjab

Steve Taylor, Manjit Singh and Deborah Booth

This paper examines a UK Jat Sikh Punjabi diasporic community Existing studies of such communities focus upon processes of identity formation within the UK We suggest that British Asian identities are shaped by social processes within South Asia as well as the UK In particular, we argue that meanings of home, amongst the UK diasporic group studied, are being importantly shaped by dynamic social and cultural processes within East Punjab Because our research is transnational, ethnography within the UK and India, we are able to illustrate that meanings of home, as part of diasporic identities, can be context-dependent, contradictory and are 'intrinsically linked with the way in which processes of inclusion or exclusion operate and are subjectively experienced under given circumstances' (Brah 1996 192)

[Keywords caste, diaspora, home, identity, Punjabi, transnationalism]

Introduction

Drawing upon transnational social research within the UK and India, this paper examines diasporic identities within a British Indian Punjabi community 'Diaspora' is used here as a theoretical concept referring to 'the economic, political and cultural specificities' which link a number of migratory movements, rather than being used as a descriptive term for particular journeys and settlements (Clifford 1994, Brah 1996 183) Our concern is with East Punjab Large-scale and predominantly 20th century migration from South Asia to the UK is a development with 'momentous implications' (Ballard 1994a 1) and East Punjab is recognised (Ballard

2003) as a major out-source of this migration Existing studies (Aurora 1967, Kessinger 1974, Helweg 1979, Bhachu 1985, Ballard 1994a, 2003, Judge 2002) have shown that it is the Jat Sikhs from Doaba who have dominated migration to the UK Consequently, this paper focuses upon one Jat Sikh community, resident within the north-east of England and retaining links with the Doaba region This diasporic group can be seen as part of a wider 'transnational community' - 'groups based in two or more countries that engage in recurrent, enduring and significant cross-border activities, which may be economic, political, social or cultural in character' (Castles 2003 20)

Previous studies of Eastern Punjabi migrants to the UK (for example, Bhachu 1985, Brah 1996, Ballard 1994a, 1994b, 2003), authors focussing upon British migration from other parts of South Asia (for example, Shaw 2000, Gardner 1995, Burdsey 2006) and wider discussions around the concepts of diaspora and transnationalism (for example, Gilroy 1993, Bhabha 1994, Clifford 1994, Vertovec 1999) have powerfully countered two widespread and connected propositions firstly, the belief in some primordial, essentialist and traditional 'Asian' culture and identity which clashes with an equally essentialist, modern 'British' culture and identity, secondly, that British Asians are stranded between these two contrasting cultures On the contrary, the above studies demonstrate that diasporic identities are continually 'in process' (Hall 1990) 'Diasporic identities are comprised of a panoply of diverse cultures (which) are inherently imbricating and cannot be disengaged from each other' (Burdsey 2006 24) In fact, as A Brah argues, because 'the multi-placedness of home' is central to the diasporic experience, 'processes of diasporic identity formation are exemplars *par excellence* of the claim that identity is always plural, and in process' (1996 197) (original emphasis)

Emphasising the dynamic, emergent and multi-faceted character of diasporic identities is important However, we wish to argue here that the majority of existing studies of Eastern Punjabi and South Asian diasporic identities, despite some notable exceptions with regard to the latter (for example, Gardner 1993, Jayaram 1998, Osella and Osella 2000b, Ramji 2006), focus almost exclusively upon dynamic processes of diasporic identity formation within western societies, neglecting equally important *dynamic* processes of identity formation within the out-source of migration The influence of South Asia upon diasporic identities is considered as highly significant by previous studies However, this influence tends not to be analysed in detail and is represented as static and unchanging Using our study of one UK Eastern Punjabi diasporic group and their transnational connections as an illustration, we wish to argue that British Asian diasporic identities are significantly shaped by

dynamic social and cultural processes within South Asia as well as those within Britain In particular, we argue that meanings of home amongst the UK diasporic group studied are being importantly shaped by dynamic social and cultural processes, with a particular focus upon processes of inclusion and exclusion, within East Punjab As Brah (1996 196) points out, 'diasporic identities are at once local and global They are networks of transnational identifications' This implies that a transnational social science is required in order to fully comprehend processes of diasporic identity formation However, despite an explosion in the field of transnational studies, much contemporary transnational social science research displays a global northern bias (Ballard 2004, Gardner and Osella 2004) Our own research is truly transnational and we are only able to advance the arguments that we do because of research within both the UK *and* India

The concept of diaspora implies a 'homing desire' which is not the same as a 'desire for a "homeland"' or an 'ideology of "return"' (Brah 1996 180) Furthermore, as K Gardner notes, the very migratory process inherently involves 'acts of the imagination, in which home and destination are continually re-imagined, and thus forever changed' (1995 35) We specifically focus upon changing images of, and the changing nature of, 'home' amongst our Punjabi community 'Home' has always been a difficult concept to define because it has multiple meanings with differing levels of abstraction (Gilroy 1993, Brah 1996, Webster 1998, Steedman 1999) For our purposes, we can point to four significant meanings of home firstly, a geographical space or material home, secondly, a site where everyday life is lived, the 'lived home' (Clifford 1994), thirdly, a nucleus of social relationships and a point of identification, a cultural home, fourthly, a 'desired home' (*ibid*) We are particularly interested in the contemporary nature of, and relationship between, these different meanings of home within the diasporic community studied Our findings confirm that different meanings of home can be contradictory, while simultaneously bleeding into each other, within diasporic experience (Gilroy 1993, Clifford 1994, Ramji 2006) Moreover, we illustrate that meanings of home, as part of diasporic identities, can be context-dependent, dynamic and are 'intrinsically linked with the way in which processes of inclusion or exclusion operate and are subjectively experienced under given circumstances' (Brah 1996 192) Our transnational research enables us to stress the importance of South Asia as a dynamic social context, and processes of inclusion and exclusion therein, for the production of Eastern Punjabi diasporic images of home and diasporic identities

Caste, Kinship and *Izzat* within Punjabi Society

Punjabi caste is defined as 'a non-localised endogamous unit' (Kessinger 1974 35) The inextricable connection between kinship and caste is maintained through endogamy A B Verma (2002), writing about the 238 castes within Punjab at the beginning of the 20th century, illustrates both economic (class) distinctions according to socioeconomic criteria (primarily through the ownership/non-ownership of land) and status distinctions (according to the nature of cultivation practiced and the numerical strength of particular castes) between different castes, and that intra-caste endogamy was rigidly practiced At the turn of the 20th century, the Jat Sikhs and the Muslim Rajputs were the dominant castes on the above criteria (Kessinger 1974, Verma 2002)

There remains a strong correlation between caste and class within East Punjab Jat Sikhs, who constitute 30 per cent of the state population, are currently the dominant caste They own over 80 per cent of available agricultural land Scheduled Castes make up 29 per cent of the state population, with 95 per cent being landless (M Singh 2002) Jat Sikhs are the most economically powerful and occupationally privileged group within the state (M Singh 2003) Furthermore, it is the relative wealth of the Jat Sikh group that has enabled them to mobilise the resources necessary to dominate migration to the UK (Helweg 1979, Ballard 1994a) This dominance has also been maintained through kinship and caste-based networks which have conveyed information about migratory opportunities overseas, and provided various forms of human and material support to enable further Jat Sikh migration (Kessinger 1974, Helweg 1979, Ballard 1994a) Previous studies (Helweg 1979, Ballard 1994a, Verma 2002) have shown that the Punjabi concept of *izzat* (prestige/honour) is central to understanding caste identity, caste relations and an attachment amongst migrants to Punjab as home even when they are permanently resident overseas These authors stress that the maintenance and enhancement of *izzat* within Punjab is a prime factor in the decisions and motivations of Punjabi migrants, as individual behaviour shapes and reflects the *izzat* of the family, kinship group and caste to which one belongs

The economic prosperity and high status of Jat Sikhs in Punjab in the early 20th century was enabled by their ownership and cultivation of land through 'hard' manual labour (especially crop farming rather than market gardening), which were markers of high *izzat* and attracted high economic returns at this time (Kessinger 1974, Verma 2002) Overseas migration has grown in importance over the past century as an indicator of high *izzat* within Punjabi society (Helweg 1979, Srinivas 1996) T G

Kessinger, A W Helweg and Verma all stress the late 20th century importance of Indian land-ownership, and thus an enduring attachment to a material and cultural home located in South Asia, for high *izzat* within the Punjabi caste structure These studies show that, even when individuals or families migrated from Punjab, land was not sold to finance this activity Land and its cultivation through hard manual labour was still the major resource through which caste dominance, in both economic and status terms, could be maintained and enhanced A family which forfeited land and gave up control over cultivation faced *de-izzat* and a resultant reduction in opportunities for marriage and kinship alliances within the wider caste group (Verma 2002) While we argue that Indian land ownership is still central to contemporary Jat Sikh *izzat* and caste dominance, we contend that high *izzat* no longer primarily derives from the agricultural cultivation of land (production), but is now asserted by the use of land for migration-derived consumerism (consumption) which in turn reflects changing meanings of home amongst the diaspora studied

Migration, Jat Sikh Diaspora and Meanings of Home

Jat Sikh Punjabi out-migration has a long history A tradition of labour migration developed during the 19th and early 20th centuries as Jats were selected for service in the British army, navy and steamship companies (Darling 1949) During the same period, the British development of the 'canal colonies', the transformation of barren districts into rich agricultural tracts, involved selecting particular peasant proprietors and Jat Sikhs became prominent here also (Kessinger 1974) Both Kessinger (1974) and A Shaw (2000) report that migrants and their families saw these trips as sojourns and a form of investment to improve wealth and social standing 'back home' The material, cultural and desired home was thus firmly and geographically anchored in Punjab, despite the lived home (for individual migrants) being partly outside the territory The loss of land, incomes and settled family life, plus the conflict and bloodshed, which accompanied partition, exacerbated a Punjabi willingness to leave the state It is estimated that 300,000 Indians migrated to the UK during the first two decades after 1947 (Juergensmeyer 1982), the majority of whom were male Jat Sikh Punjabi (Helweg 1979, Judge 2002) Kessinger (1974), Helweg (1979), R Ballard (1994a, 1994b), C Voigt-Graf (2003) and J Lessinger (2003) all demonstrate significant Jat Sikh migration from Punjab to the UK, Canada, Australia and the US from the turn of the 20th century onwards, but they also illustrate the retention of strong economic and cultural links between

these dispersed groups and the people and territory of Punjab continuing today Some estimate the current Eastern Punjabi diaspora as five million people worldwide (see Walton-Roberts 2004), over a quarter of Indian overseas migrants from a region which only constitutes 2 per cent of the national population

Previous studies (for example, Helweg 1979, Ballard 1994a, 1994b) of 20th century Jat Sikh migration to the UK demonstrate that such movement was originally viewed, for example, in the 1950s and 1960s by migrants themselves and their family and kin residing in India, as a predominantly male sojourn for the accumulation of wealth and the maintenance or enhancement of *izzat within Punjab* Thus, we can suggest that this immediate post-second world war migration was again driven by a meaning of home firmly anchored within South Asia, in material, lived, cultural and desired terms Punjabis became 'both adventurous travellers and rooted villagers' (Verma 2002 88) Existing research has also illustrated that as the majority of these sojourners became permanent UK settlers from the 1960s onwards, and were joined by wives, children and family members, meanings of home became more complex and multi-faceted For example, it is widely reported that financial remittances to India inevitably decline as migrants settle, are joined by family and often purchase a private UK property (see Helweg 1979, Bhachu 1985, Ballard 1994b, 2003) Nevertheless, the simultaneous maintenance of Indian property (Helweg 1979, Ballard 1994a), frequent travel between the UK and India (Ballard 2003), information technology-aided interaction with Indian kin (G Singh, 2003, Vertovec 2004), as well as continued orientation to the social and cultural (especially caste) relations of East Punjab (Ballard 1994b, 2003) suggest dual or multiple attachments to material, lived and cultural homes

It is within the context of multiple attachments to multiple homes, with a particular focus upon second and third (British-born) generations, that previous authors have explored South Asian diasporic identities This is a discussion to which this paper contributes As suggested above, the emphasis in relation to the Eastern Punjabi diaspora has hitherto been upon the relationship between dynamic social and cultural processes within the UK and perceptions of home and belonging For example, P Bhachu (1985), Ballard (1994b) and Brah (1996) examine relationships between socioeconomic change in the UK during the 1980s (especially recession and rising unemployment), individual and institutionalised racism in the UK and the cultural identities of British Asians D Burdsey's recent article (2006) discusses the relationship between national sporting allegiances and 'new,' young British Asian identities He argues that the lack of a 'myth of return' amongst this young

generation, combined with their lived experience of Britain, means that their widespread support for the England football team is an arena where their permanency of settlement, British citizenship and UK material, cultural and desired home can be emphasised The influence of South Asia upon diasporic identities is considered as highly significant by these studies, for example, support for a cricket team rather than a football team from the sub-continent amongst the young people in Burdsey's study is seen as evidence of simultaneously emphasising 'their ethnicities' However, this influence is not analysed in any detail and is represented as static and unchanging We merely wish to add to this existing literature by extending the context within which British South Asian meanings of home and diasporic identities are analysed, to include dynamic social and cultural processes within South Asia Again, this is only possible through *transnational* social research As H Ramji notes in her study of first generation British Hindu Gujaratis returning and retiring to India, 'the influences on returnees' (migrants) transnational social fields are not simply located in the host context but have a myriad of sources' (2006 648) If diasporic identities are inherently transnational, we require transnational research to investigate them

The Research Process

Our paper is based upon ethnographic empirical research, primarily semi-structured interviewing and non-participant observation We conducted forty-eight interviews within the Jat Sikh community of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, UK and eighty-seven interviews in the Doaba region of Punjab, India between January and April 2004

Initial access to the Newcastle community was negotiated through the local Gurdwara and a regional Punjabi community centre The historical records kept by the community centre and the 2001 UK Census were analysed to ensure that those selected for interview were representative in terms of gender and age These records also confirmed that the Eastern Punjabi community of Newcastle was largely constituted of Jat Sikhs All of the interviews in the UK were conducted in English

Following our interviews across the Newcastle community, four particular villages were chosen as research sites within Doaba The names and location of these villages have been withheld to preserve the anonymity of respondents These were the villages where our Newcastle respondents, or their parents, originated from It meant that our first interviews in India (thirty-two) were with relatives and kin of the Newcastle sample and that initial access was negotiated for us by our UK respondents Our research was then widened across the caste hierarchy to

capture the relationship between the diaspora and all those resident within India This meant that some of our interviewees (twenty-eight) had relatives residing in parts of the UK other than Newcastle, and in the United States of America, Canada, Australia and the Middle East Other Indian respondents (twenty seven) had no family/kin connections abroad We ensured that our interviews were representative of the age, gender and caste make-up of each village Random sampling and informal networks were used to access participants in all locations The research team in India was collectively fluent in English, Punjabi and Hindi, and interviews were conducted and transcribed in a mixture of these languages

We observed relationships within the UK community through attendance at social gatherings within the local Gurdwara and a regional Punjabi community centre, as well as interviewing within people's homes In East Punjab, we observed daily village life through guided tours of each village, eating and overnight stays with a representative range of families in each village and through attendance at local ceremonies

From Sojourners to Multiple Homeowners

The majority of first generation migrants in our sample arrived in the UK during the 1950s and 1960s There were two major aims to this migration, both of which were driven by a perception that such travel would maintain or increase the *izzat* of the immediate family and simultaneously the *izzat* of the wider kinship and Jat Sikh caste group Initially, when these single male migrants viewed themselves as sojourners to the UK, the aim was to utilise money earned in the UK to buy land and increase family holdings in Punjab – the material, lived (for those remaining in Punjab), cultural and desired home For example, some respondents recounted how partition meant giving up the ownership of land in West Punjab to move to the East and work as a farmer on someone else's land 'There was little money and the agricultural work was hard work without land there was little security' (UK Jat Sikh 69-year old male) There were families within this man's kinship group where males had moved to the UK and told of the opportunities of very high and stable earnings He decided that migration to the UK (in 1956) 'would be a better way to find security and stability for my family' Other first generation migrants and their families, in both the UK and Punjab, reported that insufficient land holdings to support a family and kinship group often led one or two of the males within the group to migrate abroad in search of an alternative income There were often agreements between brothers that some would look after agricultural and

family interests in Punjab (including land, parents, women and children) while the migrants would eventually provide financial support for the whole kinship group in Punjab once they were established overseas As all of our first generation respondents became permanent settlers in the UK, a priority was to accumulate sufficient money to ensure the migration to, and settlement in, the UK of the immediate family (spouse and children) Most commonly, the trigger for this family migration was the purchase of a private house in the UK

Although the volume of financial remittance to India declined as UK settlement became permanent for those in our sample, it certainly did not disappear Furthermore, the maintenance of land holdings in East Punjab and continual communication with relatives, kin and friends in India was universal throughout our cross-generational UK sample The majority of our sample also currently visit East Punjab at least once every two years For many, annual stays of two months or more by first generation migrants and their British-born daughters and sons are common We can attribute multiple attachments to material, lived, cultural and desired homes amongst the Jat Sikh diasporic group studied here However, on the basis of our transnational interviews and observation, we do wish to argue that the nature of these attachments, meanings of home. are dynamic, can be context-dependent and often contradictory Moreover, this is influenced by the social and cultural context of, and especially processes of inclusion and exclusion within, East Punjab as well as the UK

Changing Meanings of Home

There is still a commitment to the ownership of land (a material and partially lived home) in East Punjab amongst the UK Punjabis studied, with the majority expanding such holdings since the migration of themselves or previous generations However, this land is no longer used for traditional Jat agriculture but to build very large, palatial family homes within India in an attempt to assert the distinction (Bourdieu 1984) of the diasporic group – a transition from (agricultural) production to (migration-funded) consumption as the major site for the assertion of high *izzat* and caste dominance

The landscape of rural Punjab is punctuated, and in some areas of Doaba dominated, by huge houses and palaces, some with as many as sixteen bedrooms and many surrounded by large gold tipped metal fences There is usually a gold lettered sign on the gate entrance with the names and country of residence of the owners The majority of these houses have their own water tanks at the very top and often these are

shaped in the image of a particular symbol to indicate that the owner is an NRI (Non-Resident Indian) Such symbols include aeroplanes, eagles and footballs Both the outside and the inside of these houses are decorated in the most luxurious, western style and are seen by the diasporic owners as an ongoing project of continual development and refinement NRI houses are an omnipresent symbol and reminder to Indian residents of NRI distinctiveness and wealth In P Bourdieu's (1990 118) terms, we are witnessing here the way in which capital has a 'multiplier effect', with economic capital being converted into 'symbolic' capital and vice versa These houses are seen by their owners as a form of investment, wealth and status that can be passed on to future (diasporic) generations It is common for the NRI houses to stand empty for the majority of the year, only in use when the owners visit For the Jat Sikh diaspora studied, the material homes of East Punjab have become secondary, holiday homes to their primary material and lived UK home In fact, we can argue that these NRI houses are being used by the diasporic group to assert the distinctiveness and prosperity of their UK material and lived home relative to the homes of those (both Jat and non-Jat) permanently residing in East Punjab, the latter are excluded from a world in which the former are included Moreover, the fact that, for the permanent Indian residents, the point of production (wage labour/capital accumulation in the UK) has become physically and geographically separated from the sphere of diasporic consumption which they witness, has encouraged a view of the UK as a place of unlimited opportunity and of western migration as a panacea for the perceived (relative and absolute) hardships of rural Punjabi life

Illustrating the division between the (UK-funded) Indian material homes of the UK Jat Sikhs and those of permanent Eastern Punjabi residents, we encountered intense criticism from our Indian respondents of the NRI houses within their midst 'We are annoyed by the NRI houses they are an insult, people in the same village do not have enough sanitation' (42-year-old Jat Sikh Punjabi male) Our Indian participants described other ways in which NRIs 'flouted' their wealth, converting economic into symbolic capital, in an attempt to emphasise the superiority of their UK and Indian material homes

> They (NRIs) hire big cars and have very nice clothes and mobile phones and computers here we see the wealth, they show us it, of course we want it We are very poor here and live in unhygienic homes, lots of flies, lots of poverty, of course especially the young people they want to move to the UK and live a rich life, not live on farming here, hard work and no money and no hopes of betterment they buy many things in India to take

> home because they are cheaper to them Large amounts of clothes that we could never dream to buy It is a sign of their wealth We see this (19-year-old Jat Sikh Punjabi male)

The UK Jat Sikhs in our sample are seen by Indian Jat and non-Jat residents, and see themselves, as a distinct and privileged social group Our argument here is strikingly similar to that of Bhachu's study of 'twice migrants' (1985) – a group predominantly from the Ramgarhia (artisan) caste of Sikhs who left Punjab in the early 20th century as indentured labour to build the Kenya-Uganda railway, and then migrated to the UK in the 1960s in the wake of post-independence Africanisation policies within these two nations A long history of migration enabling the accumulation of wealth and assets across generations, with the simultaneous reduction of any dependence upon family and kin residing in India, meant that these East African Sikhs became an increasingly self-sustaining community *within* the UK Moreover, these Ramgarhians (traditionally of lower class and caste than Jats in India) were able to distinguish themselves from, and assert higher *izzat* than, both direct migrants from India to the UK (predominantly Sikh Jats) and Ramgarhian Sikhs within India (Bhachu 1985)

Other studies of South Asian migration, for example, from Bangladesh (Gardner 1993, 1995), Pakistan (Ballard 2004) and Indian Gujarat (Ramji 2006) to the UK, and from Kerala, South India to the Middle East (Osella and Osella 2000a, 2000b), reveal similar attempts to those reported here to assert wealth, superiority and status through diasporic consumption practices within South Asia which are geographically separate from the western production which sustains them In particular, the building of large, western-style houses, vastly different in style and décor to those of permanent residents, and funded by migrant wealth, is a common theme across all of the above studies These studies, and our own data, suggest that the nature and meaning of the material home amongst diasporic groups can change significantly as such groups become permanently settled in a primary lived home away from the out-source of migration and simultaneously exhibit their inclusion in a life (of conspicuous and symbolic consumption) from which the remaining residents are excluded Nevertheless, the very attempt by the contemporary Jat Sikhs under scrutiny to use their Eastern Punjabi material home to assert distinction within East Punjab via migration-derived consumerism, rather than through agricultural prowess, simultaneously suggests a continued attachment to the material, cultural and desired home of Punjab We are merely suggesting that the nature of this attachment is shifting, with material effects for both diasporic and non-

diasporic groups 'Home (can be) forever changed' (Gardner 1995 35) by the dynamic imagination of migrant, diasporic groups This is part of a wider process whereby 'access to global mobility' is becoming a key dynamic of social stratification within global, post-colonial society (Bauman 1998 87)

Changing East Punjab

Central to our argument is that dynamic meanings of home amongst the Jat Sikh diaspora studied are not developing within a social vacuum Neither are they produced by social and cultural processes within one nation As we have already rehearsed, previous authors and studies have concentrated upon the relationship between UK processes, South Asian diasporic identities and multiple attachments to home We emphasise the equal importance of the changing social and cultural context of East Punjab, and processes of inclusion and exclusion therein, for the changing meanings of home reported above

The nature of caste relations, and more specifically the routes to high *izzat* within Eastern Punjabi culture, has changed significantly in recent years The powerful demonstration of NRI economic and symbolic capital within East Punjab reported above combined with the positive ideological projection of the west through the global mass media (Lessinger 2003), including Bollywood representations of western societies and the lives of Indian migrant communities, is intensifying the desire of Indian Punjabis to migrate to western societies and be included in a world they are excluded from We found this desire to be widespread amongst our Doaba Jat Sikh sample Western migration and associated consumption practice is displacing the ownership of agricultural land and agricultural prowess (production) within India as the route to high *izzat* In common with Ballard (2003), Lessinger (2003) and A S Dhesi (2004), we found that the nurturing, maintenance and development of NRI connections and communications was a priority above all other ambitions, and certainly above the nurturing of agricultural land, for the Indian Jat Sikh families researched The priority of *all* of our parental Jat Sikh respondents within Doaba was to arrange the marriage of their children to NRI families, thereby apparently ensuring high *izzat* for the family These changing caste relations and identities, in turn, further reinforce the changing meanings of the Eastern Punjabi home amongst the Jat Sikh diaspora studied, from a site for the development and expression of agricultural strength to a material and cultural space for the consumer display of wealth resulting, but geographically separate, from the permanent UK lived home This social context also reinforces the

importance of displaying inclusion in the latter as an element of diasporic identity

Wider globalisation processes, in particular the increasing capitalisation of agriculture, are also significant in the restructuring of Punjabi social and caste relations (M Singh 1995, 2003) One manifestation of this can be seen by shifts within the Punjab workforce, away from agriculture The percentage of 'cultivators' as part of the Punjabi workforce has declined from 31 4 per cent to 23 per cent during 1991-2001, with a reduction of agricultural labourers from 23 8 per cent to 16 4 per cent during the same period (Government of India 2001) Simultaneously, we have witnessed an increase in migrant and 'bonded' (lower caste) labourers performing agricultural labour for below subsistence returns It is estimated that there are as many as 700,000 migrant agricultural labourers within Punjab currently, nearly half of all Punjab agricultural labourers which constitutes a dramatic proportional increase over the past decade (M Singh 2003, 2005) and illustrates the declining appeal of this work for Punjabis themselves The cultivation of land through hard manual agricultural labour is no longer a marker of Jat Sikh identity and high *izzat* within Punjab As a Jat Sikh village elder (72-year-old male) from East Punjab explains

> Jats feel shame if they have to do any real work for my generation, soiling one's hands was a matter of pride Jat youth (now) see this work as degrading They want white collar, professional jobs, preferably in the West They are sitting waiting to migrate

There has also been a decline in the value of Punjabi agricultural produce over the past decade There are recent reports (Huggler 2006) of Jat Sikh Punjabi farmers, suffering from huge and rising debts, collectively putting entire Punjabi villages up for sale which would have been unheard of even a decade ago We have also witnessed dramatically rising levels of farmer suicides, attributed to debt, within the state (M Singh 2005, Huggler 2006) For those who are still involved in Punjabi agriculture, the returns are at best intermittent and unstable Within the Doaba villages of our study, declining agricultural value is being exacerbated by the rising cost of land as the latter is purchased to house NRI buildings NRI demands for land are inflating the cost of land beyond the reach of locals For example, within one village we researched in Horshiarpur district, which has a long history of out-migration to the West (especially the UK), the price of land is currently three times that of villages with little or no NRI investment These social and cultural processes within East Punjab, of which out-migration is one

part, are intensifying the desire of all Indian Punjabi residents to achieve NRI status for material security and the assertion/maintenance of *izzat* The prime marker of high *izzat* within East Punjab, and the foundation of the economic and status dominance of the Jat Sikhs, is shifting from the cultivation of land through hard, manual agricultural labour to the cultivation and assertion of NRI status or inclusion within an NRI network This constitutes a change in the *nature* of the Eastern Punjabi cultural home, as a nexus of social relationships and a point of identification, amongst our Punjabi diaspora while continuing to illustrate the persistence of this cultural home *per se* as an element of Jat Sikh diasporic identity

(Re)Imagining Punjab

We suggest above that one of the main ways in which multiple attachments to multiple homes are illustrated by the UK Jat Sikhs under scrutiny is through regular visits of varying length to Punjabi villages We argue here that these journeys, a (partially) lived home in India, significantly affect the cultural and desired home of the Jat Sikh diaspora – continually (re)forming the nexus of social relationships in which they are immersed and shaping their very cultural identity

Many of the first generation UK migrants in our sample articulated a longing for a desired home, especially in terms of kinship relations, which they felt was deficient within their 'isolated' UK experience The views of the following woman who migrated to the UK in 1963 to join her husband were representative (across genders) of our sample

> I got a shock when I arrived in England and realised just how hard life would be, I still find it hard one of my brothers came over for six months, he couldn't stand it, he said everyone was always working, life is too hard, the weather is too cold, no-one ever sees anyone and everyone is too isolated, he went back, he called the UK a 'prison of choice' you leave the freedom of movement and the socialising of India to come to the UK, work all hours and live in small houses, isolated with no freedom of movement due to the climate, to many Indians this would be like living in a prison (66-year-old UK Jat Sikh female)

The first generation migrants in our sample experience this isolationism most strongly when they stop working Many of their children have followed the western path of departing the family abode for educational or vocational opportunities, leaving an elderly couple or single person alone, isolated and longing for the support and interaction which, our respondents argue, used to be offered by the wider kinship

group and Punjabi village life in India Whether such relations actually existed or not can be questioned, as it is common for images of home, particularly a desired home, geographically absent from the lived home of a diaspora (Ramji 2006), to be 'poeticised' (Bahloul 1999, Steedman 1999) However, it is clear that the out-migration to which the diaspora have themselves contributed has partly changed rural Punjabi life beyond the recognition and desire, poetic or not, of some first-generation migrants Some Doaba villages have witnessed dramatic changes in population and village life as a result of migration to the West Jat Sikhs in particular have been dispersed around the world Thus, when revisiting India, the Punjabi cultural home desired in the UK (as above) is seen as having disappeared As one UK NRI, while visiting 'his village', explained

> I was born here (Punjab), I have family here and land here so I have ties here and I should feel more at home here but my family are in England and so I have stronger ties there now, and many of my family are not in India any more But our culture should be here not in England, I feel that When we left India (in 1989), there were a lot of people left in our village, forty families, now there are only fourteen families There have been a lot of changes here Old ties are breaking down For example, a wedding here, the whole village would be involved, milk would be collected from the whole village to go to help with wedding food and financial help would be given from the whole village and furniture and cooking pots shared, but this doesn't happen now, it's all breaking down (53-year-old UK Jat Sikh male)

The wedding referred to had been organised by the brother (first-generation migrant) of the above respondent as the NRI son of the former was marrying a permanent Eastern Punjabi resident However, because the wider village population refused to help finance, organise or, in many cases, even attend the wedding, the ceremony became an NRI event The nexus of relationships (cultural home) within which Jat Sikh NRIs are embedded increasingly involves interaction with other NRIs, even within India, thus challenging the image (articulated within the UK rather than India) of a desired Eastern Punjabi home constituted by wide-ranging and reciprocal village relationships and demonstrating a contradiction but simultaneous collision between the lived, cultural and desired home of East Punjab

When confronted with the realities of contemporary daily Punjabi village life through their Indian lived home, the majority of our first-generation UK migrants were actually very disparaging and attempted to further assert the distinction and *izzat* difference between themselves as

NRIs and the Indian residents, including other Jat Sikhs and family/kin members, with whom they do interact

> I couldn't move back (to India) because you see it is a third world country They don't have the amenities we (in the UK) have (64-year-old UK Jat Sikh female)

> I can't stand to see the rubbish and the lack of hygiene in India It is a beautiful country but people don't keep it clean I get done, I get ripped off because they know from how I look and speak I am not from India any more they are so good at cheating you, I am helpless like a little baby I don't know anything now about India It changes so much every year, it is modern now I go to India for a holiday but it is nice to come back (66-year-old UK Jat Sikh female)

Our diasporic respondents often identified most strongly with their UK lived, material and cultural home (point of identification) when relating their experiences of revisiting India, thus challenging images of a desired Punjabi home This again illustrates contradiction, within this particular context which is characterised by processes of inclusion and exclusion, between different diasporic meanings of home (in particular between the lived/cultural and desired home (Clifford 1994, Ramji 2006)) and the concomitant bleeding of these meanings into each other

As suggested earlier, we encountered widespread Indian criticism of NRI attempts to assert high *izzat* through consumer displays within Punjab, suggesting that these attempts have not been wholly successful We can suggest that our UK diaspora are not always afforded the high status which they assert, *outside of the NRI community*, within India This further strengthens social relationships and cultural identification amongst NRIs, but weakens relationships and identification between NRIs and the wider Eastern Punjabi community Dynamic cultural and desired meanings of home amongst the Jat Sikh diaspora are being actively shaped by the lived home of India, processes of inclusion and exclusion within South Asia However, as Brah (1996) notes, such meanings of home can be context-dependent as the longing for a desired Punjabi home, constituted by reciprocal and harmonious village relations, was still articulated by many of our Jat Sikh diasporic respondents when interviewed within the context of their UK lived home

Some of our second and third generation UK respondents rejected any connection with Punjab and had no desire to even visit the area within their lifetime However, they were a minority The majority did want to continue Indian links, maintain family land-holdings and visit

India alongside first-generation migrants (lived and material home) This younger generation were also active in the consumption practices reported above which have become an integral part of the social and caste relations of East Punjab (cultural home) However, those that visited India were also acutely aware, from their partial lived Indian home, that their NRI status set them apart from the local population For example, there was recognition amongst all of our respondents that second- and third-generation migrants were treated as foreign tourists when they visited India

> They crack me up people here (Punjab), they're always on the make and they are so sharp, so sharp I can't get anything at the local price Even if it's a packet of fags and I send my cousin (Punjab resident), they know that he doesn't smoke that brand in the shop so they know it's for you and they stick the price on and bung you up, you can't get away with it Even when I went to the Taj Mahal and they have this one price for Indians and one for foreign tourists the guy on the gate clocked me He said 'where are you from ?' I said 'India' He said 'which state ?' I said 'Punjab' Then he said 'who is the Governor of Punjab ?' and of course I didn't have a clue and I had to pay the full tourist price, he stitched me up (28-years-old UK Jat Sikh male)

> They get ripped off because people know they are not from here the police bother the NRIs more because they know they have money and they know they can get more money from bribes The NRIs are targeted and they don't know how to handle the corruption and intimidation we don't call them Non-Resident Indians, we call them Not Really Indian (25-years-old Punjabi Non-Jat Sikh male)

Consequently, when articulating their experiences of lived home in India, our young UK respondents emphasised their relationships and identification with other NRIs in India rather than the resident population, even their own family and kin members Processes of inclusion and exclusion (inclusion in NRI consumption practices, exclusion from 'real' Indian status), alongside the social and cultural processes identified above, within Punjab, are producing particular material, cultural and desired meanings of home amongst second and third-generation UK Eastern Punjabis, within the context of India For example, the process of exclusion from local status actually led many of our respondents to more strongly emphasise their UK citizenship and a desired UK material and cultural home – 'reactive ethnicity' (Portes 1999) in reverse This phenomenon was not necessarily transferred across national boundaries but that does not mean that we should deny

the significance of South Asian experiences and processes for understanding changing meanings of home and diasporic identities

Conclusions

UK Jat Sikh diasporic identities can be shaped by a multitude of transnational social and cultural processes We could never hope to cover the full range of these processes in one paper so we have particularly stressed the importance of considering the dynamic social context of South Asia, and especially processes of inclusion and exclusion therein, to enable a full understanding of emergent, dynamic and context-dependent diasporic identities Our rationale for such a focus is that previous studies of UK Eastern Punjabi, and many existing studies of British South Asian, diasporic identities have largely examined the impact of UK processes upon cultural identity Where the influence of South Asia has been considered previously, it is a social context which is presented as rather static and unchanging We have emphasised the importance of considering dynamic social change in South Asia It is only through a transnational empirical research project – interviews with, and observation of, the same people, families and social networks in different social contexts across national borders - that we have been able to do this

We have only focussed upon one aspect of diasporic identity – meanings of home However, our findings have demonstrated that UK Jat Sikh meanings of home, as an integral part of Eastern Punjabi diasporic identity, can be dynamic and importantly shaped by social and cultural processes within East Punjab For example, we have argued that the nature of the material and cultural home within India for the UK Jat Sikh group studied has changed from a space for the expression of agricultural prowess to one for the consumer expression of NRI wealth and caste status (high *izzat*) This changing meaning of home has, in turn, at least partly been shaped by recent social and cultural change within East Punjab, including the impact of globalisation, capitalisation of agriculture, significant out-migration and changing caste relations Processes of inclusion and exclusion are 'intrinsically linked' (Brah 1996 192) to this changing meaning of the material and cultural Punjabi home as the very display of NRI Jat Sikh status indicates inclusion in a world of wealth and asserted status from which permanent Punjabi residents are excluded We have also suggested that the partial Indian lived home of many of the UK Jat Sikhs in our study, lived experience within India, also significantly shapes meanings of home amongst this community For example, the exclusion of NRIs from the status and

experience of feeling 'really Indian' leads to increasing interaction with other NRIs in India rather than the local population, including their own relatives and kin, and an identification with their UK home as a reaction to exclusion Again, this suggests a significant relationship between social and cultural processes of inclusion and exclusion within India and the dynamic cultural home, the latter understood as a nexus of relationships and a point of identification, of the UK Punjabis studied Furthermore, this re-imagining of Punjab (changing meanings of home amongst the UK diaspora) is changing the material, lived home (Gardner 1995) of East Punjab for everyone, diaspora and non-diaspora, for example, impacting upon caste relations and the rural development process

Our study of the relationship between different meanings of home amongst a Jat Sikh diaspora also demonstrates how these meanings can be contradictory and simultaneously bleed into one another (Gilroy 1993, Clifford 1994, Ramji 2006) In particular, we have illustrated contradiction between the Punjabi lived, cultural and desired homes of the UK Jat Sikhs studied The lived experience of the cultural home of East Punjab challenges and excludes many of our respondents from a desired home of reciprocal and wide ranging village relations which many of these same respondents articulate within the context of their UK lived home Such collisions between different meanings of home demonstrate their respective bleeding It is also crucial to stress that the dynamic meanings of home amongst the UK Punjabis illustrated in this paper can be context-dependent (Clifford 1994) For example, identification with the UK home (lived, material, cultural and desired) was at its strongest within East Punjab, when our sample were physically absent from this home, a finding which correlates with Ramji's study (2006) of UK Hindu Gujaratis returning to India In our case, UK identification was, at least in part, a reaction to the exclusion from being considered as part of the local Indian population and as a result of inclusion within NRI Jat Sikh status and the consumer displays which the latter involves, as well as a response to the changing nature of East Punjab We say 'in part' because, while we have identified some significant processes impacting upon meanings of home amongst a UK Jat Sikh diaspora, we recognise that such meanings are produced by a myriad of processes and certainly agree with Ramji (2006 648) that one must go beyond the concept of 'reactive transnationalism' as the sole explanation for the production of diasporic or transnational identity

We are certainly aware that our analysis in this paper is necessarily partial Firstly, it has to be recognised that our arguments are based upon a study of *one* UK Jat Sikh diasporic group Furthermore, it is widely

accepted that diasporic meanings of home and identities are shaped by the 'intersectionality' (Brah 1996) of multiple power relations, especially those of gender, class, sexuality, caste, 'race' and age While we have touched upon the significance of caste, class and generational relations for UK Jat Sikh meanings of home, we have not considered the immense significance of gender, sexuality and 'race' Nevertheless, we have shown how (UK Jat Sikh) meanings of home and diasporic identities are 'intrinsically linked' with how (some) processes of inclusion and exclusion 'are subjectively experienced under given circumstances' (Brah 1996 192) Our aim has been to show the importance of subjective experience within the circumstances of South Asia for UK South Asian meanings of home and diasporic identities, and to show that a full understanding of such diasporic identities, which are inherently local *and* global (Clifford 1994, Brah 1996), requires research in more than one nation

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Informal Social Networks, Sonography and Female Foeticide in India

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This article explores the relationship between the ultrasound technology, sex-selective abortions and the culture of reproduction mediated by informal social networks By informal networks here is meant social/neighbourhood and kinship ties, both as a means and a resource, and the manner these are used by people in the community The focus is to bring out the manner the informal and social dimensions of relations people have with providers of reproductive medical services and employees of the state, who as members of the same society also share a common cultural perspective and values, are revealed in everyday practice The article focuses on the multi-layered relationship between members of the community and their relationships in organising social and biological reproduction The deficit of girls in 0-6 age group occurs from a combination of anti-natalist policy, legalised abortion, and illegal foetal sex determination test mediated through informal networks

[Keywords informal social networks, politics of reproduction, desirable sex of children, sonography, convergence of interests]

The late 20th century advances in new reproductive technologies (NRTs) have generated a great deal of interest in social anthropology Upon entering South Asia, the debates around these technologies have added another issue to its complexity In fact, the debates have focussed on how people have taken to this technology rather smoothly, leading to threatening sex imbalances in society India shares with China (and other South Asian countries, with the exception of Sri Lanka) the phenomenon of missing girls (shown by 0-6 years sex-ratio data) in the population

(see Sen 2003) Throughout the rest of the world, women outnumber men The serious impact of this technology is evident through the public debates around the ethics of the practice and the worrisome adverse sex ratio of the girl child in India, which is confirmed officially by the decennial Census of 2001 (see Table 1, see also Agnihotri 2000, Mazumdar and Krishnaji 2001) Amartya Sen (1990) had raised the alarm a while ago Using sex-ratio data N Hatti *et al* (2004) have analysed the risk faced by the girl child in India Sample Survey data (1999-2000) show that the child sex ratio among the poorest 5 per cent of the households in rural areas is 946, while among the richest 5 per cent it is 804. The corresponding figures for urban areas are 903 and 819 respectively The lowest sex ratio for children is in the state of Punjab, one of the few highly developed states (with a per capital income of Rs 22,797) where there are only 793 girls aged 0-6 years for every 1,000 boys in the same age group, a decline of 115 points since the 1981 Census Goa is an exception, having a per capita income Rs 44,613, while the child sex ratio is 933 For India as a whole, the per capita income is Rs 15,562, and the child sex ratio is 927, as per 2001 Census figures

This essay explores the manner and the processes of the relationship between NRTs, particularly the ultrasound technology, and the culture of reproduction mediated by informal social networks By informal networks here is meant social/neighbourhood and kinship ties, both as a means and a resource, and the manner these are used by people in the community The focus on networks also brings out the informal and social dimension of relations people have with employees of the state as revealed in their day to day interaction as members of the same society The essay focuses on the multi-layered relationship between community members and their relationships in organising social and biological reproduction The society's institutional mechanisms, especially the practices of the family and reproduction associated with the use of NRTs, are analysed on the basis of data collected in two towns in Rajasthan and in several districts of Bundelkhand[1] region in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh Many of these practices are connected with wider material and historical influences mediated through culture Culture here implies the ideas and values by which people make sense of their social and personal lives Also, it includes the material and technological resources they deploy in accordance with the social values they infuse into these resources In doing so, the essay first provides the context of NRTs in India In the second section, it deals with reproduction as a social and political issue, both in the family and in the community Based on ethnographic data, the next section analyses the interaction among people in their access to the illegal practice of using ultrasound technology for

finding out the sex of the foetus and aborting it, if it is a girl, especially if the couple already has one daughter

Table 1 Trends in Female-Male Ratio (FMR) and 0-6 Year Sex Ratios in Selected States of India

Zone/State	FMR				0-6 Years			
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971	1981	1991	2001
North								
Punjab	-	-	882	874	892	908	875	793
Rajasthan	911	919	910	922	931	954	916	909
Uttar Pradesh	876	862	876	898	899	935	928	916
South								
Andhra Pradesh	977	975	972	978	986	992	974	964
Karnataka	957	963	960	964	968	975	960	950
Tamil Nadu	978	977	974	986	964	967	974	939
Kerala	1016	1032	1036	1058	972	970	958	962
West								
Gujarat	934	942	934	919	956	947	928	878
Madhya Pradesh	920	921	912	920	944	978	952	931
East								
Bihar	957	948	907	921	958	981	959	938
Orissa	988	981	971	972	984	995	967	950
West Bengal	891	911	917	934	1007	981	967	963
India	931	935	927	933	954	962	945	927

Source Census of India 2001, Banerjee and Jain 2001

The data have been collected through focus group discussions, and a series of informal discussions on a number of issues with NGO workers, social workers/activists and people from the community in both rural and urban areas It is important to point out the fact that use of pre-natal diagnostic technology to test the sex of the foetus with the intent to abort a female foetus is illegal in India since 1994 (and the rules have become more stringent since the amendment of the Act in 2002 and 2003) Therefore, it is not possible to find respondents, both customers and providers of ultrasound services to accept that they indulge in this practice It is in tune with the illegal nature of this test that when several persons on several occasions mentioned of the act and described the practice, it was decided to treat it as reliable information for the study, especially because no one would openly accept that he or she is indulging in an illegal practice

The essay attempts to point out that gender and family size issues bring about a convergence of culturally imbued interest and socio-economic purpose among different categories of people in the society with respect to provision, acceptance and accessing of sex-determination

technology, and aborting undesired foetuses Even if such a convergence of purpose does not lead to public good or desirable sex ratio balance at an aggregate level, on a personal and family level it often synchronises with the state's aim of the small family norm

I
The Context of New Reproductive Technology

An increasing number of women all over the world are coming under the fold of antenatal screening Since the medicalisation of birth began in the early 20th century, and with the use of ultrasonic waves in reproductive science, foetal testing has attracted a greater involvement of women in decisions about their treatment and that of their unborn babies The purpose of the technology when it was introduced in the West in the late 1960s was for an early diagnosis of foetal deformities In the West, the technology became part of the routine prenatal examination to avert the birth of what is called, 'welfare babies' Congenitally deformed babies came to be seen as a burden not only to their parents but also to the 'welfare state' NRTs have given an option to people whether or not to carry through an abnormal foetus Some of the common methods of sex determination before birth are

- **Amniocentesis** (*amnion* membrane, *kentesis* pricking) In this technique, amniotic fluid is drawn from the amniotic sac surrounding the foetus in the uterus through a long needle inserted into the abdomen Foetal cells present in the fluid help in determining the sex of the foetus It is normally performed after 15-17 weeks of pregnancy

- **Chorionic Villi Biopsy.** This refers to the removal of elongated cells (called villi) of the chorion, the tissue surrounding the foetus, through the cervix The tissue cells are tested to determine sex of the foetus This technique enables sex determination between the first 6-13 weeks of pregnancy Chorionic Villus Sampling (CVS), the other diagnostic test, is seen as having an advantage over amniocentesis But there is a miscarriage risk of 2 per cent over 1 per cent in the case of amniocentesis from CVS diagnostic test, in addition, there is an increased risk of limb defects to the foetus

- **Ultra-Sonography.** Ultrasonic sound waves (inaudible to humans) are used to get a visual image of the foetus on a screen Normally, this is used to determine the foetal position or congenital abnormalities But it can also be used to find the sex if external genitalia of a male foetus is seen on the screen It is normally performed around the 10th week of

pregnancy It is the most commonly and rampantly used method for sex determination In India, it is also routinely used in hospitals for antenatal care

The pre-conception sex-selection techniques are

- **Ericsson Method** (or X and Y chromosome sperm separation) A male child requires an XY combination of chromosomes Sperms may have either X or Y chromosome, but eggs have only X chromosome In this method, sperms are separated – into those bearing X chromosome and those bearing Y chromosome – by filtration when put in a chemical solution The faster moving Y sperms penetrate the solution's denser bottom layers The egg is then fertilised with a high concentration of Y sperms to produce a male It is now also possible to manage a pre-conception gender selection (PGS)

- **Pre-Implantation Genetic Diagnosis.** This is one of the latest technologies used for sex selection, it involves chromosomal analysis of a few cells taken from a test tube embryo (fertilisation is done outside the uterus) to determine the sex

In PGS, X and Y sperms are separated and X sperms are utilised to fertilise the ovum The method was intended to reduce the risk of diseases related to the X chromosome, which are far more likely to occur in boys than in girls (who have two X chromosomes) Introduced in the 1960s to monitor high-risk pregnancies, fetal-ultrasonography[2] had become, by early 1980s, a routine aspect of prenatal care not only in most of the industrially advanced countries but also in many others Yet another test is foetal blood sampling Foetal blood obtained from the umbilical cord with the aid of ultrasound at an early stage in pregnancy, gives the results in three days This test too carries a 1 15 per cent risk of foetal loss Vivenne Harpwood (1996) informs that foetal blood sampling is seldom used in England for technical reasons and so is the case in India

Advances in medical technology, such as the use of ultrasound and amniocentesis offer much more reliable antenatal screening and diagnosis than was previously ever possible These have enabled people to know the unknown aspects of a foetus The most common test in India is ultrasound, colloquially known as 'sonography', '*janch*' or 'test' in most parts of North India and, in some rural areas of Bundelkhand, also as '*untracson*' By the mid-1970s, amniocentesis and CVS were introduced in India for research on genetic abnormalities It began when the Government of India in 1974 ran clinical trials on amniocentesis For

this purpose, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi got 11,000 volunteers

The AIIMS survey revealed that the main motivation of the volunteer couples was to ascertain the sex of the foetus As soon as they found that knowing the sex of the unborn baby was so easy, most women carrying female babies wanted an abortion, which has been legal in India since 1971 The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 permits abortion on rather easy and liberal conditions up to 20 weeks of pregnancy The volunteers in the AIIMS research were exhilarated to find that the sex of an unborn baby is so simple to discover and at a low cost, too The few among those carrying female babies who did not ask for an abortion might be ones who had not had any daughter

With the introduction of ultrasound technology, sex-determination test has spread like wild fire all over the country hoardings appeared, encouraging parents to spend Rs 500 now to save Rs 50,000 later The New Bhandari Hospital, which advertised itself as Antenatal Sex Determination and Fertility Clinic, gave the above economic logic (see Jeffery *et al* 1984) The logic of saving a hefty amount later by sending a smaller amount now made substantial cultural sense Subsequently, the advertisement and the NRT facility spread quickly in Delhi and large towns and cities of Punjab and Haryana, where the decline in sex ratios is among the most alarming the country

Subsequent scientific advances in biotechnology and genetic research have only added to the depletion in sex ratio PGS is used in India to avoid conceiving girl children But it is a relatively new, complex and exorbitantly expensive procedure costing between Rs 20,000 and 50,000, and is not common Also, the focus of this paper is on ultrasound, which has become synonymous with sex-determination test in India, as was also found by D C Wertz and J C Fletcher (1993) in the early 1990s

II
Reproduction and its Politics

Aspects of human reproduction – that is, pregnancy, childbirth and abortion – have always been subjects of public (in the sense of body politic) as well as private concern (in the sense of individual and social body, as used by Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987) These are matters of domestic, family, community and state interest To have or not to have children, when, where and how many and of what sex are not relegated to nature as mere biological events in all known societies The focus on human reproduction as including social reproduction encompasses events

throughout the human and especially female life-cycle These events are related to ideas and practices surrounding fertility, birth and child care, including the ways in which these contribute to understandings of social and cultural renewal Even before entering the hospital, pregnancy has never been an absolutely private affair for a woman Anthropological studies (Douglas 1960, Levi-Strauss 1966) have shown that biological phenomena are culturally organised, pregnancy and childbirth are socially and culturally immersed activities (see Jordan 1978, Shostak 1983, Jeffery *et al* 1989, T Patel 1994, T Patel and Sharma 2000)

Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion and infanticide have been in the political arena for quite some time in the western world The discursive shift of pregnancy from the micro and the private to the macro and public political domain is traceable most directly to the consumer movement of the 1960s and 1970s, notwithstanding the early 20th century birth control movement This was coupled with the second wave of the women's movement that reiterated with force some of the earlier issues it had on its agenda Since the 1970s, the analysis of reproduction has been greatly envisaged by the encounter between the second wave of feminism and anthropological discourse The fall out from this encounter has contributed immensely to revitalise the perception about the socio-cultural contexts of reproduction Unwanted pregnancies and legalising of abortion were brought under the purview of rights The reproductive experiences of women are analysed both as sources of power (Mandelbaum 1974, T Patel 1982, 1994, Handwerker 1990) and as subordination (Safilios-Rothschild 1982, Mason 1984, Basu 1992, Dixon-Meuller 1993) T Dyson and M Moore (1983) set off several such studies The local social arrangements within which reproductive relations are embedded can also be viewed as inherently political Linking reproduction with women's movement provides us the connection between the local and the global issues around it

Additionally, seemingly distant power relations shape local reproductive experiences in multiple ways as we shall see in the practice of ultrasound tests But it is also important to remember that population control ideology, influenced by Malthusian views takes us deeper into the history of global and local links with reproduction or its control In India, as mentioned earlier, abortion was legalised in 1971 to encourage population control

Let us also recapitulate that at the micro, household and family levels, fertility is the most significant marker of womanhood Being a mother has been critical for a woman in the Indian context

> Fertility ensures the mother a permanent position in the conjugal household. Childbirth lends stability and security to the bride's relationship with other household members. After establishing herself as a mother, a woman overcomes her disabilities as a bride and daughter-in-law and gains some authority. If a woman does not bear any child for 4-5 years after marriage there is serious concern (T. Patel 1994: 76).

This is how women in Rajasthan see their reproductive responsibility. Operating routinely at the micro political level in the household and the family, the ability or inability to reproduce has cultural meanings. Birth is not merely a biological event, it is also a social event, as it creates relationships. The harrowing experiences of childlessness faced particularly by childless women in rural India (*ibid*.), in urban India (Widge 2001), in Egypt (Inhorn 1996) and in many other parts of the world (Inhorn and Balen 2002) are palpable. The ideology of motherhood is pervasive in these societies. The desire for pregnancy and childbirth is a recurrent theme.

The primary expectation from a married woman is that she will become pregnant soon and bear children. Typically, a woman knows of no acceptable role for herself than that of wife-mother. Childbirth dispels immediately the stigma of barrenness of a couple, especially that of a wife. The first child's sex is secondary, more important is the couple's fertility (Patel 1994). The religious rites a woman participates in are also predominantly related to increasing her fertility. A woman requires to bear children to prove her womanhood, and a man desires children to attain full manly state and hence dignity. Even grandparents are eager to have grand children as their status gets enhanced in society. The whole family is desirous of having children. By bearing children, it is fulfilment of both social expectations and personal desires (Oakley 1982). It is not only that motherhood brings status to a woman but it is also an attribute without which she is useless. She justifies her existence and is privileged only as a mother of son/s. Sons are regarded as critical for continuing the family line, for family's religious rites and rituals, especially to light the funeral pyre of parents. It is through sons that parents can anticipate a relaxed old age with daughter-in-law to run the household and look after them (see cases cited by T. Patel [1994] on how disconcerting and disheartening births of 'daughters only' can be). Sons are also important to take on the responsibility towards the sisters and daughters of the family. It is not just dowry at the time of wedding, but a continuous flow of gifts that a daughter and her children and others in her conjugal family receive from her parents and brother/s. S. Vatuk (1975) discusses the flow of prestations from the bride's kin to her husband and his family

among the Gaur Brahmins in Uttar Pradesh Her focus is on the flow of gifts and not on the importance of having a son or a brother My data from Rajasthan and Bundelkhand show how fathers and brothers are often arranging, especially providing for the giving of gifts and carrying them to daughters and sisters, both their own (*sagi*) and classificatory ones on a number of life cycle rites and ritual occasions

Parents generally prefer a son in comparison to a daughter, especially after having one daughter One daughter is acceptable if not always welcome among all caste and class categories North India has been notorious for its violence against women, especially female infanticide in the past and until the early decades of the 20th century (Panigrahi 1972, Vishwanath 2000) The region is also infamous for female neglect (Miller 1981, Das Gupta 1987) Infant and child mortality has been higher for females at those stages in a child's life when socio-cultural influences more than biological/immune strength become important for survival of infants and children Table 2 shows infant mortality trends by sex over time The incidence of female infanticide is increasingly surfacing in certain pockets in the southern states of India as well (Bumiller 1990) Using reverse survival methods to estimate sex ratio at birth for several parts of India, S Sudha and I S Rajan (1999) found an increasing masculinisation in sex ratio The skewness in the sex ratio was brought out starkly also by an analysis of the data from the second National Family Health Survey (NFHS) conducted in 1998-99 (see Arnold, Kishor and Roy 2002) at the all India level, the sex ratio of the last births was 697 girls for every 1,000 boys, among currently married women who did not want any more children This is much lower than 935, the sex ratio for the other births A Bose and M Shiva (2003) have found that the sex ratios at birth are consistently declining with parity and birth order in Haryana and Punjab (see Table 3)

The all India fall in sex ratio disfavouring the girl child aged 0-6 years (927 girls for every 1,000 boys), especially when the overall sex ratio has marked a slight improvement between 1991 and 2001 (933 females for 1,000 males) signifies the abuse of NRTs To examine the fairly widespread diffusion of prenatal diagnostic screening, especially ultrasound technology in the Indian society, I am looking at the ethnographic data collected through several brief visits to two towns in western Rajasthan during the 1990s and early 2000s, and in 14 districts in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, that is in Bundelkhand region during 2002-05 While in Rajasthan data were collected through long-winding discussions on several related issues without conveying the intent of research, in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh the data were collected through focus group discussions, and interview-schedules and

Table 2 Infant Mortality Rates and Death Rates (0-4 Years) by Gender

Year	Infant Mortality Rate		0-4 Years Death Rate	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
1905	218	231	-	-
1936	153	170	-	-
1955	91	99	-	-
1964	72	76	-	-
1972*	148	132	-	-
1984	104	104	39 6	43 1
1993	75	73	22 7	24 8
1999	73	71	22 2	25 6

Note * 1972 is the year at which female infant mortality rate increased over that of the male infant mortality rate
Source Premi 2001, Agnihotri 2000

Table 3 Sex Ratio by Birth Order in Haryana and Punjab

Birth Order	Sex Ratio	
	Haryana	Punjab
First order	890	698
Second order	787	830
Third order	743	664
Fourth order and above	577	96
Overall	787	458

Source Bose and Shiva 2003

unstructured interviews As mentioned earlier, the instances and case details were taken as reliable after a few iterative, though indirect, triangulations The limitation of the data is the inability to confirm it with the practitioners This limitation is bound to remain, as acceptance of this practice is a punishable crime Also, in cases where a woman or her family member/confidant confided in me, I have respected the trust the respondent reposed in me The study adopts the multi-sited ethnographic method as it follows the practice of NRTs in these locales, in exploring the rapid, enthusiastic and secretive incorporation of NRTs and the rampant use of ultra-sonography for aborting female foetuses

III
Seeking Sonography through Social Networks

As a consequence of protests by women's groups and civil society groups,[3] the use of ultrasound and amniocentesis technologies have been

banned through what is called the Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 (PNDT) This Act provides for the regulation of the use of PNDTs for the purpose of detecting genetic or metabolic disorders or chromosomal abnormalities or certain congenital malformations or sex-linked disorders The misuse of PNDTs, which in most of India has been to test the sex of the foetus, was banned in Maharashtra even earlier Vibhuti Patel (1987) provides a detailed discussion of how the protests were organised and a ban sought (see also Jesani 1998)

In order to prevent the misuse and abuse of the new technology of sex pre-selection at the pre-conception stage, an amendment in PNDT Act, 1994 was brought about in 2002 and implemented in 2003 The 1994 Act now stands renamed as 'The Preconception and Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act' The Act prohibits sex selection before and/or after conception It regulates but does not deny, use of prenatal diagnostic techniques, such as ultrasound, for the purposes of detecting genetic abnormalities or other sex-linked disorders in the foetus Hospitals are supposed to refuse to declare the sex of the foetus even if people are curious and often keen to learn People in both urban and rural areas are aware of the ban Unlike the openness about foetal tests prior to the ban, they are now shrouded in secrecy Yet, NFHS-II (1998-99) found that 13 per cent of the pregnant women self-reported having gone for prenatal sex determination during the last pregnancy, amounting to about 3 6 million women having access to the technology (reported in Jha *et al* 2006)

Despite its widespread prevalence, there is something peculiar and secret about it Sonography/'untracson' (that is, sex determination test and sex-selective abortion) carries a mixed meaning It is both good and bad at the same time, bad enough to keep it shrouded and good enough to continue the practice

The case of Maina, a nurse working in a town in Rajasthan presents a rather complex picture where she is chided by her urban, natal family for producing a second daughter, while her husband's rural family members feel sorry and are clearly unhappy that she has produced another daughter after the first one Maina grew up in a city while her husband, employed as a clerk in the public sector, was raised in a village Their first child, a daughter, was born while Maina was still studying and her husband was unemployed They both got their jobs in another town after the first child was born, in Maina's natal home as is the custom in Rajasthan It was not easy with both of them having new jobs and a child to raise Some or the other older child from her husband's family (husband's elder brother's child) came from the village to baby sit After

a few years, Maina was pregnant again and developed high blood pressure during pregnancy She could barely manage to carry her pregnancy through with the heavy burden of her demanding job No one in the hospital gave her any respite until a matron saw her dragging herself through the ward dutifully The matron's intervention shifted her to a lighter ward where she could work a little less Neither she nor her husband had thought of summoning help from the family despite the state Maina was in It was something they had to endure and there was an assurance that the hospital is there in case of any crisis Additionally, they were feeling they had been taking a great deal of support from the family kin and did not consider asking for additional help After Maina delivered her second baby, the news reached her natal family It was the second daughter for Maina She was hoping to have a son On learning of the second daughter's birth, her mother was of course unhappy Two of her sisters went to see Maina after her mother-in-law and her mother had been with her to look after her and others in the house for a fortnight each Both the sisters besides looking after her also gave their piece of mind They showed their unhappiness at her laxity in being in a hospital and yet not being clever enough to manage a sonography to test the sex of the baby One of the sisters said,

> You are already so overburdened with work in the hospital and then have the house to look after You also have blood pressure And now you have to produce another baby (as you need to have a son at least) Why did you have to be so innocent? Had I been told about your pregnancy I would have suggested the test to you and you would have been more free today It is such a burden to raise daughters in present times And who gets two daughters these days?

Our next case is from Bundelkhand One of the NGO workers (Raj), who was part of a two-day-long focus group discussion in Jhansi, was a young lady in her thirties Oddly enough, she was unmarried and saw little meaning in getting married Inability to accumulate enough dowry and having obtained a master's degree in sociology in the meantime might have made finding a suitable match all the more difficult in her case She did not wish to elaborate about it even when politely prodded She lived in another city and was in Jhansi for this meeting

Coincidentally, her elder sister was in hospital and she had met her that morning before the focus group discussion meeting began The sister had delivered a girl, second in a row, and had no sons She is a housewife and her husband is in private employment The heaviness of the conversation she had with her sister that morning was visible on her face

She was less chirpy than on the previous day At one of the points in our discussion, the event overpowered her, and she poured out with an open heart the whole story When her sister had conceived the first time, she was rather anxious about the sex of the baby to be At that point her husband dissuaded her from having the sex detected They had a daughter That was three years ago Though she was upset, her husband was supportive and made clear that he did not mind if it was a daughter, their first child But when another daughter arrived, all hell broke lose When the sex test is possible to obtain, what justified the pregnant woman being lax about it? The family felt that had it been decades ago, the unfortunate event was pardonable, but not today It is common in Bundelkhand not to treat the parturient mother well if she produces a daughter It is a means to convey that she is responsible for producing the undesirable baby, notwith-standing the biological role of the father in the sex of the baby Many are not willing to believe that the mother has little role in the formation of the baby's sex The saying commonly quoted in Bundelkhand is *'beta ho to taliyan, beti ho to galiayan'* (greet with clapping when a son is born, and curse when a daughter)

The dislike by the husband and his family was loud and clear They did not see the baby, let alone ask after her well being or that of the mother Little was brought by way of food or medicine for the new mother Her husband instead abused her for producing another girl That morning the threat her husband gave was too hard on the parturient mother He made it clear that he did not want the girl in his house Unlike on the first day, the next morning's meeting with Raj in the hospital, the mother expressed her wish to her younger sister 'I wish this girl were dead She will not let me survive ' She felt guilty for having produced a second daughter 'She did not feed or hold the baby the previous night', said Raj Newspaper reports were recalled for me during the fieldwork that vigilant nurses had caught a couple of parturient mothers trying to kill their babies by stuffing their mouths with tobacco or thrusting jute into their throats Obviously, violent though they are, such cases are few and far between And Raj's sister was apparently too overwhelmed to do anything along these lines

The assumptions and acceptance if a second or third daughter is born have altered in the last decade and a half, thanks to sonography The woman is held responsible for conceiving a female in the first place, and worse still for not aborting after sonography Also, I am not sure if Raj's sister had not had a sonography It is an illegal test for knowing the sex of the foetus, and is best kept shrouded This doubt still lingers in my mind because, not only did I reliably learn, besides it was commonly reported by people in villages and towns in Bundelkhand that Jhansi is

the hub for sonography and abortions, Gwalior being the next This mother could not bring herself to kill her baby, nor did she have the courage to take her baby home The matter was further corroborated when two months later, we had another meeting and learnt that the new born girl was given away to be raised by Raj and her parents, to make way for the mother to re-enter her husband's house after bearing a second daughter (the undesirable one) Her unmarried sister's step saved her marriage The sayings, 'may even my enemy not have a daughter' and 'one whom god is slow-poisoning', come from the pain and suffering a daughter's birth and upbringing can cause to her parents and maternal grand parents

IV
The Convergence of Interests against the Silent Victim

Since 1978, there has been more or less a regular presence of village health workers, auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs), and anganwadi workers who make door to door visits to motivate parents to have fewer children to be able to look after them well From two or three children (*do ya teen bacche*) in the 1970s, the small-family norm had shrunk to only two children (*hum do, humare do* – we two, ours two) in the 1980s, though for most parents in rural areas, it has remained three children with at least two sons By the late 1990s, the small-family norm for Family Planning Programme, which was renamed after the political emergency as Family Welfare Programme, came to mean 'a boy or girl' (*ladka ya ladki*), though it still means two children, with at least one son, in most parts of India With the desire for having a smaller family, the efforts to have not more than one daughter have become more widespread (see Wadley 1993) At the macro level, this trend was pointed out by M Das Gupta and P N Mari Bhat (1997) The average annual growth rate for the decade 1991-2001 has come down to 1 93 per cent from 2 14 per cent in the previous decade However, the Family Welfare Programme would like the decline to be sharper than the one achieved in the last decade

Despite its anti-natalist policies, India formally gave up target chasing two years after the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994 Though target free, the approach since 1996 held the message of the small family as one child family 'The goal of achieving stable population has continued undiluted and indeed targets were given up with the specific objective of achieving faster progress in the goal of stable population' (GOI 1999 5) ANMs are to set their own targets on the basis of the needs worked out with the community They are now expected to assess the needs of the local people and the

community in consultation with them The ANM's needs assessment requires her to be in close interaction with local community members To get a great deal of personal information, she has to build rapport with the community members They expect her to be helpful in health matters One of them told me, 'I often accompany a woman to a dispensary if she requests me After all, they also come to my aid when I need them Can you clap with one hand?' ANMs and anganwadi workers in Bundelkhand reside in the village or in the vicinity of the village under their charge They keep the records of all the pregnant women, their fertility history is known to them Their infants' and children's immunisation status and antenatal state of the pregnant women is recorded ANMs submit their monthly records to their supervisors Being a member of the community, the ANM is liable to think and behave like one She understands the community needs and can empathise with residents more than the higher level officials in the health system wish or care to do They have come to know rather well that abortion is the means to achieve a desirable composition of children through ultra-sonography

ANMs feign ignorance about any local facility for ultrasound tests But the prompt reply is, 'People go to Jhansi and Gwalior for the test (*janch*), they don't come to us' One ANM in a small town centre near Datiya said, 'Sometimes if there is a case of miscarriage in my area, I drop the name of the woman in the next month's pregnant women's record What else can you do?' She muttered softly, 'If the woman has a daughter or two already, what can you tell her?' Another ANM, who used the word 'untracson' for ultrasound, confided, 'Am I so foolish not to understand the pressure on such a woman? Only after having a son can one suggest her to sterilise I don't even mention contraception to her before she has a son this high (she meant three-to-four years old) '

A team member from an NGO in Bundelkhand, who has been working in the field for over twenty years, reported that

> Ultrasound test is now easy to have The doctor takes the ultrasound machine from his clinic and keeps it in the boot of the car and drives the car to a village/hamlet He parks the car in front of a house of a local acquaintance or where the village health worker has suggested him in advance Those pregnant women who need to get the test (ultrasound) done trickle into the house for the test In a couple of hours, the car returns to town Often the village health worker gets a ride in the car The fee for the test is paid to the doctor either in the house where the test is conducted or in the clinic in town by the health worker, who collects it from the clients in advance The health worker gets his cut for each test

The household and the family in India, as elsewhere, is a cooperative-conflicting unit (T Patel 2005) The micro-politics of the family disadvantages its women, especially the younger ones It is with the birth of sons that women get a stronghold in the family Whether the husband and in-laws approve or not, women find producing girl babies, especially after one, to their detriment They have a vested interest in avoiding a daughter's birth, especially after one has been born E Bumiller (1990) recounts the killing of daughters by low-caste women in South India The stigma of sonlessness is not an abstraction, it is real and very palpable Often girl children are not included in reporting the number of children one has [4]

The misery of not being able to produce a son is not limited to the household or the mother-in-law–daughter-in-law dyad, but spills rather quickly beyond the conjugal family If a woman is not worldly wise and allows other emotions to prevail by not aborting an unwanted female foetus, there are ways to make her see reason, as happened in the case of Raj's sister It is not only the women's conjugal relatives, but also her natal kin and relatives are interested in her having a son and not having more than one daughter, as in the case of Maina Individuals are tied to each other and to the local systems in which they live The idea of all relatives forming a sort of panopticon, as it were, in Balinese society (Wikan 1990), is close to what goes on in Indian families and the local community too People's affective commitments and fears are mediated through the family and community, and their performance, including fertility performance, is a means through which their evaluation discursively and otherwise takes place along the social ladder

The social ties among medical practitioners and state officials are such that law enforcement officials and medical practitioners are friends if not relatives Bose and Shiva (2003) report that they meet at social gatherings and clubs and play cards together But the nexus is more than just club life

The combination of legal abortions (also possible in government hospitals at government cost) with the illegal foetal sex test (done privately) is managed in ways other than mediated through local health functionaries, that is, through relatives or friends Like the Family Planning Programme taking itself to people's doorstep in the community in the 1960s and 1970s, the ultrasound machines too reach people's doorsteps Motorable road networks in India have improved and expanded extensively during the 1990s Just as laparoscopic sterilisations gained women's acceptance in the 1980s (T Patel 1999), sonography/ *janch* has also been accepted enthusiastically as nothing hitherto-fore It has brought about a unity of purpose between the Family Welfare

Programme and the people's aims The family obtains the desirable sex composition of children, government health staff posted locally fulfils their targets, and private medical practitioners make money, while the female foetus disappears The unborn girl is not there to level charges or demand justice!

Notes

I thankful for the comments received on a different version of this paper, 'Science, Gender and Social Networks the Missing Girl Child in India' presented at the Institute of Social Studies, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi, on 26 September 2003

1 I am thankful to Oxfam-Lucknow for the Bundelkhand data collected for research on domestic violence and sex ratio

2 Sonography is medically considered a harmless test in the sense that it has no radiation, and no pricking is involved No fluid is taken in a routine sonography It involves just a probe on the abdomen where sound waves are sent; they reflect back and are picked up by the probe again The womb can be virtually peeped into and the insides sighted It is indeed a technological feat and empowers humans over nature The technology for foetal testing has brought down to a great extent, high risk births, such as babies born with neural tube defects or Down's syndrome, one of the leading causes of mental retardation world wide The main diagnostic test for Down's syndrome is amniocentesis, which involves the sampling of amniotic fluid obtained by needling through the wall of a uterus Amniocentesis was traditionally used to screen for certain genetic diseases It is only done and warranted in high risk pregnancies where the mother is (i) more than 35-40 years old and is first-time pregnant and (ii) where there is a family history of a genetic disease If the foetus tests positive for the genetic disease then medical termination of pregnancy is advised (an option given to the parents) The results of the test take up to one month to obtain, by which time the pregnancy will be advanced Since the desirable time for the test is between 16-20 weeks, it is risky and painful to abort at the advanced stage of pregnancy The test is diagnostic and usually provides definite confirmation of Down's syndrome and other chromosomal anomalies of the foetus, except in some cases of ambiguous results because of laboratory errors

3 This has been an achievement for the Indian feminists, sensitive lawyers, scientists, researchers, doctors and women's organisations such as Women's Centre (Bombay), Saheli (Delhi), Samata (Mysore), Sahiar (Baroda) and Forum Against SD and SP (FASDSP) – an umbrella organisation of women's groups, doctors, democratic rights groups, and the People's Science Movement Protest actions by women's groups in the late 1970s got converted into a consistent campaign at the initiative of FASDSP in the 1980s Even research organisations such as Research Centre on Women's Studies (Mumbai)), Centre for Women's Development Studies (Delhi) and Voluntary Health Organisation, Foundation for Research in Community Health also took a stand against the tests Even while the PNDT Act, 1994 was unable to stop female foeticide, the yet newer technology of sex selection at the sperm stage, that is, pre-conception sex selection arrived on the Indian scene The sex of the desired baby could now be chosen even before conception by separating the sperms having x from y chromosomes In order to prevent the misuse and abuse of the new technology of

sex pre-selection at the pre-conception stage, an amendment in PNDT Act, 1994 was made in 2002 and implemented in 2003

4 Kalaivani mentioned this happening in Andhra Pradesh in south India, where the term for 'insignificant', or 'some one who'll not be there in any case' is invoked in response to a query about girl children Arima Mishra mentioned about how the term for involuntary childlessness and sonlessness is often the same in the Oriya language (personal communications)

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Aboriginal Businesses and Entrepreneurship in Canada: Towards Economic Self-sufficiency

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The aboriginals in Canada have a history of colonisation for over two hundred years The European settlers used racist legislations to destroy their socio-cultural systems and suppress their efforts to build political organisations The shift in policy of the Government of Canada is seen in the recognition of aboriginal rights to lands by the Supreme Court in 1973 This article deals with the emergence and growth of aboriginal business It is based on secondary data generated at the government level, empirical studies conducted by Wanda Wuttunee and Yael Levitte, and interviews with twenty-four aboriginal businesspersons in Winnipeg city It emphasises the significance of organisational characteristics of aboriginal communities, the social networks of their members, and the government policy on aboriginal business and entrepreneurship

[Keywords affirmative action, economic self-sufficiency, entrepreneurship, professionalism, social networks, sufferings]

The aborigines in Canada have a history of discrimination and suffering for over two hundred years During the last three decades, the Canadian government has changed its policy to remove barriers and create educational, employment and economic opportunities for the aborigines In the context of aboriginal economic development strategy of the Canadian government and the organisational efforts of the aboriginal people at community level, this article provides an account of their overall educational and economic development It also assesses the impact of government policy on the development of aboriginal businesses in Winnipeg city, a major centre of aboriginal people in Canada

The History of Colonisation and the Sufferings of Aborigines

The aborigines of Canada have a history of over two hundred years of colonisation The European settlers adopted several ways of dominating them developing negative images of the aborigines, alienating them from their natural resources, isolating them from modern education and economic development by settling them on reserves, separating children from their parents by introducing Residential School System, etc The following is a brief account of these aspects of domination

Negative Images

Generating images of a social group has a function of defining inferior or superior status in society Since the last five hundred years a number of negative images associated with the Indians[1] have been projected by Europeans and North Americans in Canada that those people have fluffs and feathers and flowing beards They were described as savage, very hairy, ferocious and quarrelsome Their images have been objectified in advertisements, in promoting products, in movies, etc (Doxtator 1988) Besides, they are described as alcoholic, lazy, filthy, uncivilised, worthless and inferior The Report of the Working Group on Aboriginal Participation in the Economy to Federal-Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs and National Aboriginal Leaders (11 May 2001) also endorsed that 'Systemic barriers, misconceptions and stereotypes about aboriginal people have had negative implications for aboriginal participation in the economy' (p 8)

Isolation on Reserves

Since the aborigines are settled on 2,300 Indian reserves, they are isolated from the mainstream culture/development process They are living with their traditional cultural and occupational traits, for example, fishing and hunting The reserves are legally owned by the federal government People are not permitted to mortgage their land, and for purchase, they need approval from the federal government The Arctic Inuit are known as hunters and gatherers But they were prohibited from commercial fishing and hunting The adverse conditions such as infertile land, poor housing, limited power supply, and restrictions on aboriginal autonomy have 'locked Indians into a cycle of unemployment, over-crowding, poor health, and dependence on welfare' (York 1990 79)

Treaties Rendering Aborigines Resourceless

Lands in Canada were open to the nomadic bands Initially, the fur trade introduced the economic relationship between Europeans and aborigines It led Europeans to colonise Canada with signing over 50 treaties since 1760-61 While entering into treaties, promises were verbal In 1870 and 1871, the treaties were signed between the Indians in Manitoba and the representative of the British government for creating reserve lands by granting 160 acres per family of five (Frideres and Gadacz 2005 188) Under Section 31 of the Manitoba Act, 1870, 623,000 hectares as unoccupied land was set aside for the children of Métis families in Manitoba, but the allotments were retained subject to the payment of local taxes (*ibid* 196) Also, the lands taken for public utilities were not compensated by the government And the lands taken by European settlers were most fertile Several thousand sq km of territory is involved in each claim of land, for example, 41,000 sq km of land was involved in the agreement between Sahtu Dene and Métis (McDonald and McDonald nd 20) As a result, several hundred land claims with disputed or unfulfilled treaty obligations have been submitted to the Indian Claims Commissioner At the turn of 20th century, over 200 land claims have been settled (*ibid* 28) The procedure for assessment is lengthy, taking a minimum of five to eight years Also, development projects such as hydro dams, uranium mines, oil wells, pulp mills, etc posed a threat to the existence of aquatic lives, animals and health of the aboriginal people Thus, the treaties made them resourceless and made it difficult for getting their lands back

Racist Legislations

After the settling of Europeans in Canada, the British and the French formed the Government of Canada in 1867 and introduced racist legislations The European colonialists interfered in the everyday life of the aborigines The aborigines were segregated in cinema theatres, high school classrooms and cafeteria The police broke up their council meetings For leaving their reserve they had to take permission from the Indian agent Their rituals and ceremonies such as potlatch, the sun dance and other dances were banned by an amendment to the Indian Act in 1895 In 1892, the Indian Act was amended to give authority to the Department of Indian Affairs[2] to operate Indian Residential Schools for the children between ages six and sixteen Under the residential school system, children were taken away from their homes without the consent of their parents In the schools, they were taught to hate their culture and

renounce their heritage They were not allowed to speak in their native languages All this caused the destruction of the aborigine culture They were made victims of sexual abuse and brutal beatings From the 1960s to the early 1980s, the provincial governments had a child welfare policy through which thousands of Indian and Métis children were seized from their natural parents for adoption by middle-class couples in the USA Manitoba's aboriginal leaders called this policy 'cultural genocide' (York 1990 206-14) In 1984, the last residential school was closed But the Indian youths feel trapped between two cultures – traditional native and modern white (*ibid* 97)

Moreover, the Indian Act of 1927 prohibited the aborigines from forming political organisations The contribution of money to political organisations of Indians and raising money for court actions were made illegal The Indians were excluded from voting in elections until 1960 Besides, Section 89 of the Indian Act discouraged aborigines from starting business on the reserves, because it did not permit a person living on reserve to use land or any other personal property to pledge, mortgage, attachment etc It was a barrier for getting loans sanctioned by a government-financing agency Also, discrimination against Indian and Méti tenants was so widespread that a housing unit was not given on rent (*ibid* 82-83) All these above-mentioned adversities are becoming things of the past since the Canadian government has changed its policy to end segregation

Shift in Policy

In the latter half of the 20th century, the Government of Canada changed its policy to assimilate aboriginal people into mainstream social and economic life of Canada The real beginning of change is seen in the recognition of the aboriginal rights to lands by the Supreme Court in the case of *Calder* vs *Attorney General of British Columbia* in 1973 Subsequently, both Canadian Human Rights Act, 1977 and the Constitution Act, 1982 held that all individuals are equal In 1996, the Supreme Court, in three cases, recognised the right to sell fish

The federal government adopted certain policies of discouraging aboriginals' living on reserves such as slowing down of housing construction and closing down schools in reserve areas In 1951, the federal government allowed Indian children to attend provincial schools of non-Indian (white) children These policies encouraged out-migration from reserves to off-reserves Moreover, in June 1983, the Royal Commission established the employment equity programmes to address the issue of discrimination and sufferings of aborigines Since it did not

help in ending biases and discrimination significantly, the Employment Equity Act was passed in August 1986 – a uniquely Canadian approach toward affirmative action intending to eliminate barriers to employment and achieve equality at work place But this Act was criticised for having no teeth

Defining the Aboriginal Peoples

Since aborigines in Canada do not have a single racial or cultural or territorial background, certain contesting issues emerged The aboriginal people comprise of the Indians, the Métis and the Inuit Until the 16th century, Canada was the land of Indians and Inuit Since early 17th century, the French began to settle, and in the mid-18th century, the British came to establish their settlements Those who were born to European settlers and Indian women in the district of Assiniboia, the southern part of Canada, in the early 1800s, are known as Métis, the French term used for half-breeds In 1870, as a result of the demands of the Métis, the southern province of Manitoba was created The Métis are most urbanised among the three aboriginal populations The Manitoba Act of 1870 does not distinguish between the Indians and the Métis But the Métis National Council, created in 1983, identifies the Métis as aboriginal people, distinct from the Indians and Inuit Also, the Supreme Court, in its decision of 19 September 2003, recognised the Métis as aborigines under the Canadian Constitution And the Inuit, the Arctic people, are ex-Eskimo Since non-aboriginals did not come into contact with them, the Inuit remained relatively free from mixing Statistics Canada 2001 identifies 976,305 people as aboriginal Of these, 608,850 (62 4%) are North American Indians, 292,310 (29 9%) are Métis, 45,070 (4 6%) are Inuit, and the remaining 30,075 (3 1%) people are identified with more than one aboriginal group [3]

Development of Aboriginal Organisations

The aborigines in Canada have a cultural heritage of living together in bands Today, about 600 bands live in reserves across Canada They have a kinship system characterised of 'giving, sharing and reciprocity' within communities They have a distinctive pattern of socialisation children are taught to think for themselves and act for others For personal efficacy, the qualities of leadership, community, cooperation, reliability, follow-up, and teamwork are respected They respect elders, and regard women as their strength They have fora to express their voice, including dissent The control of assets is considered to be an essential element of

economic development Salway Black analyses assets into three types (i) an individual's assets such as house, savings account, education, job skills, business and access to credit, (ii) a community's assets such as programmes, land, institutions, trust funds, access to credit, and natural and human resources, and (iii) national assets, such as trust funds, federal programmes, institutions and sovereignty (cited in Wuttunee 2004 18-20, 48-50)

In a 1999 report, *Native-American Philanthropy Expanding Social Participation and Self-Determination*, Mindy L Berry states that 'Native Communities express their generosity regardless of their economic and social conditions' (cited in United Way of Winnipeg 2004 34) Also, a video programme, *It's Our Way,* produced under the auspices of the National Aboriginal Voluntary Organisation, provides a traditional perspective of 'giving back, caring, and sharing' (cited in *ibid*) This can be recognised in the development of social, political, economic and cultural organisations of aboriginal communities

In the last fifty years, several organisations of aboriginal communities have adopted community-based entrepreneurial perspective in their business initiatives, and they have set up over fifty nationwide co-operatives In the case of Inuit, the 'value of co-operation' in their hunting, whaling and in everyday life has been observed to be applied to the conduct of everyday business affairs in their village corporations (Nielsen 2000 155) D Newhouse found approximately 600 aboriginal organisations, mostly located in urban Canada (cited in Frideres and Gadacz 2005 321)

Many aboriginal organisations have been developed because of their dealings with different governments Land claims have been the main issue, and education, childcare, cultural and political powers have been other issues in their dealings To develop women's self-confidence and to end sex discrimination regulations in the Indian Act, the Native Women's Association of Canada was founded Some organisations play their role to influence decisions at different government levels and to form links to government officers Considering the importance of mass media as powerful instruments of changing public opinions/attitudes, aboriginal intellectuals have published several dozen periodicals The number of such periodicals increased from 37 in 1971 to 156 in 2001 And, in the last two decades, over 100 periodicals have been published (see Frideres and Gadacz 2005 338) They have set up the Aboriginal People TV Channel and the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation in 1982 In their programming, they have the objectives of developing aboriginal identity, promoting action on particular issues and developing political awareness The above-mentioned growth of aboriginal founded political

and other organisations and service programmes has been described as 'aboriginal self-government', which is widely recognised for overcoming colonial situations (Ponting 2005 161)

Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy of Government in Canada

The federal government has adopted the Canadian Aboriginal Economic Development strategy which comprises eight programmes (i) business development, (ii) joint ventures, (iii) capital corporations, (iv) community economic planning and development, (v) access to resources, (vi) urban employment, (vii) skill development, and (viii) research and advocacy (see Frideres and Gadacz 2005 357) Also, for the implementation of these programmes, the government has taken the responsibility to establish linkages between private sector, aboriginal communities and governments at the federal, provincial and territorial levels (*ibid* 356)

To inspire aboriginal entrepreneurs, the Aboriginal Business Development Centre housed in Winnipeg's Aboriginal Centre was established in March 1998 It aimed to provide facilities to enable banks to access appropriate support from various levels of government, to build bridges with other aboriginal firms, to provide assistance in identifying and coordinating partnerships and joint ventures between aboriginal and non-aboriginal business groups For promoting aboriginal participation in the economy, the private sector is important in providing experience and training to the workforce, giving employment, and in allowing access to capital and market The *Report of the Working Group on Aboriginal Participation in the Economy* (2001 14-20) mentions many good examples of private sector leadership working with aboriginal individuals, communities and businesses For example, Syncrude Canada Limited is the largest industrial employer of aboriginal people in Canada Also, it purchases millions worth of goods and services from native-run businesses For providing employment to aboriginals, the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Council helps in building a network with private sector As a result, 15,986 aboriginals got jobs over three years (that is, 1999-2001)

In 1970, to encourage individual entrepreneurship, the federal government established the Indian Economic Development Fund for aboriginal commercial and industrial development Later, it was replaced by the Aboriginal Economic Development (AED) strategy In 1983, the Native Economic Development programme was initiated for providing funds for aboriginal-owned development corporations and community-based business enterprises In 1989, the federal government adopted the

AED strategy by making a provision of nearly $ 900 million for five years To finance business start-ups, the National Aboriginal Capital Corporation Association (NACCA) was formed The NACCA has surpassed $ 1 billion mark of aggregate loan to aboriginal entrepreneurs across Canada In 1999, to improve aboriginal businesses, the Aboriginal Business Development initiative was launched with the provision of $ 21 million

To provide strategic direction to government, the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board, comprising of aboriginal leaders with business development and finance background, has been set up To provide business support to the potential aboriginal entrepreneurs, the Canadian government has set up financing institutions such as Aboriginal Business Canada, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development For improving access to banking facilities at community level, some banks have taken initiative The Bank of Montreal, for example, established an Aboriginal Banking Unit in 1992 and opened sixteen branches in the localities of aboriginal communities The Royal Bank set up an Aboriginal Banking Division in 1995 and it operates six branches in their localities The First Nations Bank of Canada was launched in December 1996 It has designed the Micro Loan Programme to benefit graduates The Scotiabank has opened some branches on reserves The Business Development Bank of Canada has an agenda of growth capital for aboriginal business It provides $ 25,000 for start-ups and finances up to $ 10,000 for existing businesses

For export market, the Aboriginal Business Canada has a programme to provide grants to the aboriginal entrepreneurs for foreign travel to participate in trade fairs Since 1985 some thirty-three Aboriginal Capital Corporations (ACCs) have been established to provide small business start-up capital and to coach to young entrepreneurs These are owned and controlled by the aboriginal people The ACCs offer loans, especially to those who are not ready to secure business loans from banks

The Aboriginal Human Development strategy was designed in April 1999 with a provision of $ 1 6 billion for a five-year period It supports enhancing childcare for First Nations and Inuit communities To encourage aboriginals to avail of post-secondary education, in 2003, the federal government made a provision of $12 million for their scholarships It is given for tuition, tutorial assistance, books, supplies and transportation Besides, the federal government granted funds to a special institution in Regina called the First Nations University of Canada (Frideres and Gadacz 2005 108 and 121) Also, the aborigine-specific Community Future Development Corporations provide loans as well as training

In the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, in medicine course, 15 per cent and 10 per cent of the seats in occupational therapy and physical therapy respectively are reserved for the aboriginal students who meet all entrance requirements Also, the University of Winnipeg prepares students for entry into professional courses (Glendinning 2005 69-70) In 1985, the Indian Community Human Resource Strategy Programme was implemented Its purpose was to enable adult members of the Indian and Inuit communities to pursue initiatives oriented towards individual training, employment and entrepreneurial development

All these encouraging measures have been adopted to have access to capital, technology, training and marketing for aboriginal persons wishing to start up their enterprises Here, therefore, it is necessary to examine the impact of both community organisational activities and several government measures on the development of aboriginal businesses

Impact of the Canadian Government Policy and Programmes on the Development of Aboriginal Businesses: A Review of Surveys and Studies

According to Statistics Canada Survey, 2001 and the Aboriginal Entrepreneurs Survey, 2002, aboriginal businesses are performing well The number of self-employed aboriginals has increased from 20,195 in 1996 to 27,195 in 2001 The National Aboriginal Capital Corporation Association through its member institutes created 13,000 aboriginal businesses and 30,000 aboriginal and non-aboriginal jobs (see *www nacca net*) Of the total, 86 per cent do their businesses off-reserve, while 14 per cent do it on-reserve Fifty-two per cent of the aboriginal entrepreneurs were from urban areas and 48 per cent, from rural areas Among the aboriginal entrepreneurs, 46 and 47 per cent belong to North American Indian and Métis respectively, 3 per cent belong to Inuit and 4 per cent to multiple aboriginals Over one-quarter of the aboriginal entrepreneurs were under the age of 35 and the median age group was 35 to 44, while for self-employed Canadians overall it was 45 to 54 At gender level, the proportion of aboriginal males was 63 per cent, and females, 37 per cent

Based on the data on 1,126 aboriginal entrepreneurs, the Aboriginal Entrepreneurs Survey, 2002 notes that their business is growing, reporting profits and gaining ground in higher knowledge sectors such as professional, scientific and technical services (see Statistics Canada 2002) Interestingly, in during 2000-02, 45 per cent of the entrepreneurs introduced new products in their business The Survey records that, since 1996, the number of self-employed aboriginal people in Canada

increased by 30 7 per cent Of the total aboriginal businesses, 43 per cent have been operating for 10 years or more, 24 per cent, for 6-9 years, and 33 per cent, for 5 years Thus, the aboriginals' entry into business is of recent origin

Regarding financial support, the Survey reports that 81 0 per cent aboriginal businesspersons had invested their personal savings, while the others had received financial support from the government (11 1%) or aboriginal organisations (7 9%) The data on the type of ownership show that 67 per cent of the businesses surveyed were set up under sole proprietorship, 18 per cent operated under partnership and 15 per cent were incorporated Seventy-seven per cent of the businesses surveyed reported to be operated from home As regards the type of business, the number of aboriginal businesses operating in manufacturing, transportation and warehousing activities increased from 2 per cent in 1996 to 10 3 per cent in 2001, and their businesses in professional, scientific and technical, education, health and social services increased from 7 per cent in 1996 to 22 5 per cent in 2001 Aboriginal businesses not only created employment for the aboriginal people, but for others also For marketing their products and services, a majority of businesses had local markets besides their province, 18 per cent had markets in other provinces, and 13 per cent of businesses exported their products to other countries To enter the international export market, the aboriginal companies have been taking part in the Annual Frankfurt fair since 1995, and more than 100 aboriginal businesses have been listed in the Aboriginal Export and Trade Directory

In addition to the above-mentioned survey-based reports, three studies on entrepreneurship, namely, *In Business for Ourselves Northern Entrepreneurs* (1992) and *Living Rhythms Lessons in Aboriginal Economic Resilience and Vision* (2004) by Wanda A Wuttunee, and *Bonding Social Capital in Entrepreneurial Developing Communities* (2004) by Yael Levitte have been reviewed here The first covered fifteen small entrepreneurs and ten of them belonged to the aboriginal communities – Inuit (7) and Métis (3) – selling grocery, art pieces at the art gallery, running restaurant, laundry, operating a fishing camp, a commercial bakery, a gas station, a retail and a repair shop for sporting goods, a regional weekly for aboriginal people, retailing novels, magazines, newspapers, computer graphics, computing and office supplies, delivering mails, providing office and warehouse leasing, cartage and janitorial services, and translation and interpretation services Most of these were family businesses and a few were partnership concerns Interestingly, there were 41 co-operatives operating char fishery, grocery store, hotel, taxis and cable service, having annual sales

of $ 3 5 million in 1990 The factors for success of their businesses were friendly behaviour, cleanliness, hard work, family support, team spirit, quality service, reasonable prices, support of the community, trust in authority and supportive policies for employees

In the second study, focusing on eight aboriginal investment groups, Wuttunee (2004) observed the integration of traditional wisdom (that is, sharing in common) into both business and sustainable economic development of their peoples, instead of focusing solely on profits The first survey on aboriginal business women notes the social objective of starting business 'to create jobs for kin and friends and to provide local goods and services' (EDCAW 1993 6) Also, a study conducted on three aboriginal communities in northern Ontario shows that bonding networks played an important role in supplying of capital, knowledge, assistance, consumers, and support networks for skill upgrading (Levitte 2004 57) Thus, the studies on aboriginal business across Canada show that community served as an asset for bringing about aboriginal peoples' economic development

In view of the role of social capital or community bonding, as observed by both Wuttunee (2004) and Levitte (2004), and the Canadian government policy of integrating aboriginal peoples into the mainstream Canadian society, I have selected Winnipeg city, one of the aboriginal business centres in Canada, for my study of aboriginal business enterprise The details of this study are presented in the next section

The Winnipeg Study

This study did not intend to examine the concept of entrepreneur in any of its conventional connotations such as 'innovation' (Joseph Schumpeter), 'rational value' (Max Weber), 'value orientations' (David McClelland), 'loss of status' (Everett Hagen) and 'profit-seeking' (Frederik Barth) This is because none of the above elements is strong in the aboriginal peoples in Canada In the light of a policy shift, as Levitte (*ibid*) examined the development of interaction between public policy and social networks in northern aboriginal communities in Canada, I have also used the concept of interaction for examining entrepreneurship in aboriginal communities in Winnipeg

The study presented here is based on both secondary and primary data collected during the author's visit to Calgary and Winnipeg cities for five weeks (25 May–30 June 2005) The objectives of the study were as follows

(a) to examine the impact of Canadian government policy and programmes introduced in the interest of aboriginal peoples,
(b) to examine the training and experience backgrounds of aboriginal businesspersons at personal, familial and schooling levels, and
(c) to investigate supporting/motivating agencies - community organisations or persons who encouraged aboriginals to enter into businesses

Based on the secondary data on aboriginals' education, migration, service jobs, the Aboriginal Business Directory and subsequent interviews with businesspersons, the following hypotheses were formulated

(a) the policy of the federal government to curtail services in education, housing and health on reserves, and funding economic organisations and educational institutions located in cities encouraged aboriginals to migrate to urban centres and enter businesses,
(b) the federal government's pivotal role in adopting aboriginal economic development strategy, that is, training and financial support, encouraged aboriginals to undertake businesses, and
(c) community organisational activities directly/indirectly motivated aboriginals to undertake/maintain/grow their businesses

For the empirical examination of these hypotheses, Winnipeg city, the capital of Manitoba province, was selected

Winnipeg City: The Study Area

Winnipeg city is known for a preponderance of aboriginals and their businesses The data show that, in Canada, the aboriginal population off-reserve increased from 99,281 in 1981 to 205,188 in 1991 and to 237,387 in 2001 (Frideres and Gadacz 2005 160) In 2005, nearly 80 per cent of the off-reserve aboriginal people lived in large metropolitan centres (*ibid* 158) In 2001, Winnipeg had 55,755 (8 4%) aboriginal people in its population of 661,730 This is the largest number of aboriginal people registered in the eleven metropolitan areas This increase is attributed to migration, as their unemployment rate on reserves was about 29 per cent in 1997-98, while it was 10 per cent for the general population at the national level (*ibid* 103)

In the city, Métis were enumerated as the single largest group, numbering 31,390 (56 3%), followed by 22,955 (41 3%) Indians and 180 (0 3%) Inuit Among the aboriginal people, the proportion of female was 53 46 per cent and among the non-aboriginal people, it was 51 34 per cent In 2001, the median age of the aboriginal population in the city was 24 7 years, while for the non-aboriginal population it was 37 3 years

Winnipeg city has become a centre of some political, social and educational organisation activities The Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg Inc was established in 1990, especially to develop a network of supporters for political programmes It is a non-profit organisation It purchased a building in central location costing $ 1 1 million by raising funds from the Board of Directors of five aboriginal organisations It has a forum for discussion and promotion of positive directions on the issues of business development, employment, justice to children and women It offers services such as education and training, women's advocacy and communication (Wuttunee 2004 62, 64) There is an Aboriginal Advisory Committee set up in 1996 It organises workshops for both aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples Targeting youth, they focus on education, employment, housing, economic development, and the issues of sustainability of community (*ibid* 57) These organisations help setting up educational institutions, economic enterprises, and carrying out such programmes in the interest of their people

The city is a seat of two universities, namely, University of Manitoba and University of Winnipeg Besides, a number of aboriginal institutions and offices have contributed to the growth of aboriginal education Aboriginal Community Campus provides education opportunities to aboriginal youth Aboriginal Education Directorate provides leadership and coordination for departmental initiatives in education and training Aboriginal peoples have control over their two schools in Winnipeg The Manitoba Indian Education Association provides academic, financial, and social counselling services for First Nations high school and secondary students The Red River Community College helps aboriginal students with programme planning, registration and other academic, personal and career concerns The Urban Circle Training Centre Inc has a holistic approach to training and employment opportunities for aboriginal people These are human development resources for aboriginal Winnipeggers

The 2001 Census shows that 10 4 per cent of aboriginal adults (in 25-44 years age group) were attending school This proportion was almost double compared with 5 4 per cent of the non-aboriginal adult population Educational level with grade twelve and higher for aboriginal adults aged 15 years and over in Winnipeg rose from 33 3 per cent in 1991 to 52 4 per cent in 2001 In the city, the number of aboriginal adults (15 years and above) obtaining bachelor's degree or higher increased from 1,200 in 1996 to 2,240 in 2001 – a significant increase of 86 7 per cent In 2001, 39 2 per cent aboriginal adults of the same age were with a post-secondary degree, diploma or certificate Among the aboriginal groups in higher educational attainment, the proportion of Métis adults was more (42 9%) compared with Indian adults (34 5%) In 2001, in

post-secondary education in applied science, technologies and trades, 25 2 per cent of aboriginal students were enrolled, in commerce, management and business administration, 23 3 per cent were enrolled, and in social sciences, 14 2 per cent were enrolled (*United Way of Winnipeg* 2004 51, 52, 63 and 64) These data indicate the growing educational attainment in general and, more importantly, in applied courses

The employment rate for aboriginal people aged 15 years and above in Winnipeg rose from 43 3 per cent in 1996 to 55 1 per cent in 2001, and the unemployment rate dropped from 25 1 per cent in 1996 to 14 3 per cent in 2001 (ibid 18) According to 2001 Census, of the total youth employment in the city, the representation of aboriginal youth in the occupation of sales and services is the largest (45 8%) followed by business, finance and administration (16 8%), and trades and transport (11 3%) (see Table 1) Interestingly, the representation of both aboriginal and non-aboriginal youth in all occupations is comparable

Table 1 Representation of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Youth (15-24 years of age) in Employment, Winnipeg – 2001

Occupation	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	Youth Population	Per cent	Youth Population	Per cent
Management	145	2 8	1,670	2 9
Business, finance and administration	850	16 8	9,795	16 8
Natural and applied sciences	130	2 5	2,555	4 4
Health	140	2 8	1,710	2 9
Social science, government and religion	215	4 2	2,425	4 2
Art, culture, recreation and sport	185	3 7	1,825	3 2
Sales and services	2,320	45 8	28,725	49 1
Trades and transport	575	11 3	5,420	9 2
Primary industry	190	3 8	1,270	2 1
Processing and manufacturing	320	6 3	3,080	5 2
All Occupations	5,070	100	58,475	100

Source United Way of Winnipeg 2004 47

In the self-employed category, there were 1,080 aboriginal persons in Winnipeg city in 2001 In the aboriginal adult population, compared to other metropolitan cities, this proportion is noticeably less (see Table 2) But the proportion of self-employed aboriginal persons in the city has

Table 2 Number of Self-Employed Aboriginal Persons in Metropolitan Areas with Largest Aboriginal Populations in 2001

Occupation and Income	Winnipeg	Edmonton	Vancouver	Calgary
Adult aboriginal population (age >14 yrs)	39,200	30,540	28,880	17,570
Number of self-employed aboriginal persons (per cent)	1080 (2 75)	1160 (3 79)	1580 (5 47)	1090 (6 20)
Median household annual income of aboriginal persons	$ 30,785	$ 40,595	$ 37,621	$ 47,135

Source Statistics Canada 2001 Aboriginal Community Profiles

been accounted for by the increase of 24 9 per cent between 1996 and 2001 (*United Way of Winnipeg* 2004 9) A recent survey on aboriginal businesses in Manitoba province indicated that their average number of years in business was 13 5 (*ibid*) The median household annual income of aboriginal persons in Winnipeg is substantially less ($ 30,785) compared to the income of aboriginal persons in other metropolitan cities

The distribution of the aboriginal labour force in 2001 (see Table 3) shows that white-collar workers to be the single largest category The pattern of distribution is almost the same in all the four metropolitan areas

Table 3 Percentage Distribution of Aboriginal Labour Force in Metropolitan Areas with Largest Aboriginal Populations in 2001

Category	Winnipeg	Edmonton	Vancouver	Calgary
White collar	42	38	41	40
Art, culture, recreation and sport	2	2	4	2
Sales and service occupations	28	29	29	27
Trades, transport, primary and manufacturing sectors	28	31	26	30
Total	100	100	100	100

Source Statistics Canada 2001 Aboriginal Community Profiles

The data presented in the Tables 1, 2 and 3 show that, in Winnipeg city, the greater number of aboriginal persons is seen in the jobs of sales and services, self-employment and white-collar categories This is because

the city has several social supportive systems aboriginal controlled education institutions, for example, Yellowquill College, Sagkeeng Employment and Training Services Centre, political organisations, for example, Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, Manitoba Métis Federation, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, social organisations, for example, aboriginal Centre of Winnipeg, Women's Council of Manitoba, Owiisookaage (that is, those who work closely together to help other), cultural organisations, for example, Manitoba Indian Cultural Education Centre, Indian and Métis Friendship Centre, media organisations, for example, Aboriginal Peoples TV Network, Native Communications (that is, radio broadcasting), First Perspective (that is, national aboriginal newspaper), and financing agencies, for example, Aboriginal Business Canada, aboriginal Business Leaders and Entrepreneurs, Tribal Councils Investment Group of Manitoba (see United Way of Winnipeg 2004) All their organisations and service centres motivate the aboriginal people and help the needy to seek the required support from the offices of governments both in Winnipeg, at the provincial and the municipal levels, and Ottawa, at federal level

The Selection of Respondents

For the selection of respondents, the *Aboriginal Business Directory* (Manitoba Province) updated on 10 May 2005 by the Procurement Services Branch, Winnipeg was used as a source Of the total 205 aboriginal businesses listed, a large number of sixty-two were engaged in consulting services such as business and finance, culture, education and training, engineering, environment, health, development and planning programme, followed by thirty-eight, in communication services and equipment such as media, printing, telecommunications, graphic design, website design and production, and twenty-three, in construction services such as building contracts, roads and bridges, flood protection, etc (see Table 4) These businesses highlight the recognition of their attainment of expertise, technical skill, knowledge and experience in various fields of enterprise

For the adequate representation of sample, it was decided to interview forty-two (20%) aboriginal businesspersons But the businesses were at distant locations, spread over 465 sq km of the city, and I had to depend on the local aboriginal residents both for locating the business places and introducing the respondents Nonetheless, the sample is sizable for understanding the links between social networks of the aboriginal business people and the Canadian government programmes for them

Table 4 Type of Business

Business	Number of Businesses	Number of Respondents
Accommodation	07	-
Clothing and Footwear	02	1
Communication Services and Equipment	38	8
Construction Services	23	2
Consulting Services	62	4
Food	07	2
Furniture and Furnishings	03	-
Maintenance and Repair	10	1
Medical and Dental	10	-
Office Equipment	09	1
Operating Services	15	-
Publications and Reference Materials	03	2
Recreation	14	2
Community Development Corporations	02	1
Total	205	24

For making the sample representative, the plurality of business by commodity, the type of business ownership, gender and aboriginal community were the prime criteria Seventeen male and seven female interviewees were not the owners of businesses The form of ownership was varied limited company – ten, self – four, family – four, co-operative – two, government supported (non-profit) – two, incorporated – one, and jointly owned by husband and wife – one Of the twenty-four businesses, fourteen (58%) were owned by the Métis, nine (37%) by the Indians and one TV network business by the members of the three aboriginal communities The ownership of the businesses is nearly proportional to their populations, that is, 56 per cent Métis and 41 per cent Indians respectively And these businesses were set up between 1980 and 2003, except the printing business, which was set up in 1964

The Interview Data

For setting up a business one has to pass through several stages – having the knowledge of a business, inspirational source for taking up business, access to capital/credit, getting space, business operation, and getting customers/clients

Business knowledge is necessary whether it is by formal education or training/ experience/interest Of the twenty-four businesses, two, namely, catering and publication of aboriginal literature, were supported by the Manitoba Métis Federation, Winnipeg and were operated by the Métis

employees The educational background of these two entrepreneurs is not considered in the analysis of aboriginal entrepreneurs' business knowledge Among the other twenty-two business entrepreneurs, eight had a twelve-grade education and four of them had completed certificate course in their trades Five respondents each had a degree and a diploma in their required branch of knowledge And the remaining four respondents had middle-school education In addition to the formal education, seventeen businesspersons had work experience in their related jobs and the remaining five had acquired skills by self-learning All respondents had their formal education in government institutions, six of the twenty-two businesspersons had experience/learning background in the community-based organisations, college, vocation, and father's job Thus, in respect of work experience, community organisations have significantly contributed to the attainment of business knowledge

Inspirational source for taking up business Possession of some knowledge required for a business is not sufficient for taking it up since it is a venture In our study, business knowledge, active participation in community programmes, encouragement/suggestion by elders in the family or a relative, and work-experience in similar type of business were found to be the inspiring factors in taking up businesses

In the case of some nine of the twenty-two respondents, business knowledge led them to set up their independent businesses The participation of members of aboriginal communities in organisational programmes is found to be an important factor as a source of inspiration for seven respondents The issue of minimal telecasting programmes of aboriginal peoples by the National Canada TV was discussed in a meeting of aboriginal members, where the idea of launching an independent channel – *Aboriginal Peoples Television* – came up A respondent who set up the Aboriginal Leadership Institute in March 2000 revealed that, after having the experience of working as a chief of the Assembly of First Nations, he recognised the need for a training institute to develop leadership characteristics for delivering self-governance, especially in band chiefs, band councillors, elected leaders, senior executives, leaders of aboriginal organisations, administrators, youth, women and elders One interviewee, who had an experience of working in aboriginal organisations across Canada, said that 'it was sheer motivation to generate wealth to contribute towards First Nations' self-sufficiency by being a player through the *Tribal Councils Investment Group of Manitoba* in mainstream economy of Canada' A female respondent, who was doing a business of blanket manufacturing, got the idea of business in a talk with a woman friend from her community A music-programme-performer respondent reported that, since he was

working with his community, people encouraged him to launch a business of music programme In the case of one of the chief promoters of a cooperative retail food store, the researcher was informed that, in community meetings, the idea of establishing a retail food business came up A female respondent, who had twenty years of experience of dealing with communication business in a large corporation, revealed that, in 1994, she had attended a conference organised by the Indians where she got information about business start-up In the case of four businesses, namely, consultancy, lending money, mobile retail shop, and plumbing and heating, the family members and a relative (paternal uncle) are reported to have encouraged them One respondent, the president of the First Nations Buying Group, emphasised experience, since he had a long experience of doing business He mentioned that he was an employee in Hudson's Bay Company Also, he had opened and built a new 1,000 sq mt chicken store and established a Canoe Travel Company

Thus, in all these interviews, in taking up businesses both the factors of business knowledge obtained in formal educational institutions and the participation of respondents in their aboriginal community programmes appear to be instrumental as sources of inspiration to most of the interviewees

Initial investment and its sources It was important to know the initial investment to start a business and its sources Of the twenty-four aboriginal businesses, since the informed persons at the time of interview were not present, the researcher could not get the information of initial investment in two businesses, namely, the Aboriginal Peoples TV Network and the Pemmican Publications One respondent of the First Nations Buying Group refused to reveal the amount of investment Also, it must be mentioned here that three non-profit businesses, namely, restaurant, Pemmican publications and leadership training, were exclusively community businesses and were dependent on government funding

In twenty-one businesses, the investment amount ranged from $ 1,000 to 270,000 Twelve entrepreneurs initially invested the amount between $ 10,000 and 80,000, and four entrepreneurs had started their businesses with the amount ranging between $ 1,000 and 6,000 In five businesses, the investment amount ranged between $ 100,000 and $ 270,000 Thus, a majority of sixteen businesses belonged to the category of small business

Regarding the sources of funding, the data show that ten enterprises had raised their capital from more than one source, mostly government and community agencies Of these ten enterprises, as mentioned above, three community-owned businesses were relying on government funding

and the other three community businesses had raised funds from their community members exclusively In the case of nine individual enterprises, the funding was received from community agencies And the other nine respondents had their source of own savings from their earnings The four respondents belonging to the small business category had received support from their family members, that is, parents, husband and wife, brother and sister, and a relative Only two respondents raised money by borrowing from their friends, and one had received some material on credit from a supplying agency and the food business operated by a cooperative society Thus, apart from three community businesses financed by government, the data show that as many as eighteen individual and other community businesses had their support generated by community financing agencies and personal networks

Availability of space and location of the business For getting customers across the social segment, the location of business operation is important Fourteen of the twenty-four businesses were operating in the market centre None of the respondents reported the experience of racism in getting rented space It shows the liberal attitude of white Canadians in giving space to aboriginal businesspersons Of the ten businesses, seven businesses were operating from homes in residential localities Of the seven businesses, particularly the retail food mall and the blanket manufacturing were operating nearby market, while the businesses of performing music programme, consulting service (that is, share knowledge and management), account consultancy and software development were operating from the home places of the respondents And the remaining three businesses such as restaurant, art gallery and the publication of Métis literature were operating from the aboriginal community owned centres It means, for the business space and location, besides home-based offices and community organisations provided spaces, the market principle of negotiation seems to have worked

Getting customers/clients Getting customers/clients is one of the essential factors for running a business Of the twenty-four business entrepreneurs, twelve in the businesses of recreation, communication, manufacturing, construction, investment and consultancy had customers/clients across their communities Of these twelve business entrepreneurs, five had customers from aboriginal segments and in two cases the customers were provincial and federal government agencies The only Méti in construction business was entirely dependent on government agencies Also, the only Indian in business and research consultancy services had 50 per cent clients from government and 50 per cent from aboriginal communities, while the respondent doing printing business

had aboriginal organisations as customers Besides two community-based businesses, some five businesspersons told that their customers were mainly from their communities The only Méti who was in software development business had customers mostly from non-aboriginal segments

Regarding the prospects of their businesses, all respondents were hopeful of their business maintenance except for manual printing set up in 1964 because of the recent digital computerised printing Two of them reported huge prospects in their businesses, namely, software development and plastic repairs

Although most of the businesspersons had customers across their communities, at least one-fourth of the businesses were mainly dependent on their community customers and some four businesses on government agencies The dependency on both community and government customers is significant for considering their role in running some businesses

Experiences of social barriers Since there is a historical background of racism against the aboriginals in Canada, in the interview guide there was an item on social barriers, if any, experienced in setting up businesses by the respondents Interestingly, twenty of the twenty-four respondents told that they did not experience racism in their business dealings It is necessary to mention here the case of software development which comes under the government procurement policy, under which the tenders are to be given to the aboriginal companies

Three of the four respondents experienced racism of the usual kind An Indian origin respondent having BSc degree in both maths and computer science, a consultant in management and business, perceived the racial bias of whites in the words that 'not much worthy of and so second in priority' Another respondent, who manages the retail co-operative food store, mentioned 'class racism' in the sense that white upper class customers were not coming to the food store though the customers were from across the community Another Indian respondent engaged in print media business revealed her experience of racial discrimination as follows 'a bank lady-manager surprised seeing some cheques of support and said oh, how you got these?' After hearing these words the respondent felt insulted and changed the bank One of the four respondents complained of bias in what his aboriginal brethren say about him 'that he is not as qualified as non-aboriginals are' The above-mentioned experiences are few, racism does not seem to be a big barrier to undertake and run a business

Aboriginal Business Entrepreneurship: A Success

For measuring the success in aboriginal business entrepreneurship, four criteria have been applied (i) respondents' assessment about their businesses in terms of satisfaction, (ii) rise in sales, (iii) growth of income, and (iv) rise in employment In general, all the respondents expressed their full satisfaction about running their businesses Fifteen business respondents told their rising sales in two-digit percentage, which calculated to be in an average 23 87 Exceptionally, the two respondents in the investment group and the software development, told that their sale rose by 1,700 per cent and 300 per cent respectively, while three respondents did not report positively about their sales – a music-shop owner mentioned 'up and down', an accountant consultant said 'steady', and a printing-press owner told that his sales had risen in the past but since recently it was 'falling' because of the competition from digital printing The remaining non-profit businesses also were growing, particularly the Aboriginal Leadership Training and the Aboriginal Peoples TV network

Fifteen of the twenty-four respondents revealed their incomes to be ranging from $ 2,000 to $ 75,000 per month, an average $ 20,700 per month Six of these fifteen respondents were repaying their loans The respondent who was managing the affairs of retail food store felt overburdened with repayment of loans Besides the four respondents in non-profit businesses, three respondents did not disclose their income

Regarding the number of employees working in their enterprises, initially at the start of business the average number of employees was 3 83, and by June 2005, it was almost double, that is, 6 37 In eight businesses, the number of employees remained the same

Thus, of the twenty-four businesses, a majority of thirteen such as investment, software development, print media, TV, business consultancy, money-lending, mobile-set sales, plastic repairs, equipment supplies, publishing and music were found to be flourishing Besides the government-founded businesses and the other three surviving private businesses, namely, music shop, accountant consultancy and woodland art sales, the remaining five businesses were observed to be doing well The respondents attributed their success to their strong determination and dedication to work, perseverance, best quality service, and satisfactory dealings with customers and maintaining networks with community members and public in general

Findings and Discussion

The following findings emerge from the study

1 Aboriginal enterprises in Canada are observed to have emerged in the last two-and-half decades
2 All businesspersons had their formal education in government institutions and most of them had work experience in their community-based set-up
3 The participation of aboriginal persons in their community programmes provided the inspiration for taking up their business
4 Three-fourth of the total business enterprises had received support from their community financing agencies and personal networks
5 Although most of them had customers/clients across their communities, the dependency of one–fourth of the businesses was observed to be mainly on their community customers, and in the case of four businesses on government agencies
6 Except in a few cases, racism was not reported to be a barrier in undertaking and maintaining their businesses
7 Most of the respondents were satisfied in running their businesses with rise in sales, growth of income and rise in employment
8 The respondents attributed their success as entrepreneurs both to their professionalism and maintaining social networks

For setting up a business, some amount of capital for investment and entrepreneurial skills are required These have been made available to the aboriginal people by establishing the National Aboriginal Capital Corporation, the Aboriginal Business Canada and the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy with a private sector All this is mainly due to the recent shift in Canadian government policy to integrate the aboriginal people into mainstream socio-economic life of Canadians Nevertheless, the rise of the business enterprise among the aborigines could not have been possible without the organised systems/initiatives of the aboriginal people themselves

We must, therefore, consider the role of aboriginal communities in their forms of kinship and band systems of 'giving, sharing and reciprocity' for setting up their own investment groups, namely, the Tribal Councils Investment Group – representing a total of 92,000 First Nations shareholders (Wuttunee 2004 123-31), the Bigstone Cree Nation Enterprises – of 5,500 registered members (*ibid* 131, 139), the Toquaht Nation (*ibid* Ch 4), the Malivik Corporation – of 8,500 Quebec Inuit (Frideres and Gadacz 2005 104) and the Lousi Bull (York 1990 104) across Canada About several organisations in Winnipeg, we have

seen that their own educational and training institutions, political organisations, media and financing agencies inspired the aboriginal members for taking up businesses For both setting up and running businesses, our interview data showed that the respondents in Winnipeg city got support from the members of their family, kin and community directly or indirectly Also for running their businesses, one-fourth of the respondents were dependent on their community customers/clients In this way, both primary and secondary data confirm the hypothesis that community systems contributed to setting up and running aboriginal businesses

Whose role is more important, whether the role of government or aboriginals' initiatives? In my view, the prime importance has to be given to the role of the government because integrating policy helped aboriginal business development, but it is difficult to view it without the initiative of aboriginal people

Notes

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1 The terms Indians, First Nations and North American Indians are interchangeably used in this article
2 The Department of Indian Affairs was created in 1880 to govern the lives of Canada's aboriginal people (York 1990 5)
3 Regarding the rise of aboriginal people in recent calculation, Statistics Canada states that enumeration was not permitted, or was interrupted before it could be completed, on 30 Indian reserves and settlements Later, the aboriginal people living on these geographical areas were included and the incomplete enumeration was completed Different phrases, namely, Aboriginal Origin, Aboriginal Identity, Registered Indian and Band Membership, are used to describe their demographic profile Since there is no single definition of the aboriginal population, there are different estimates of its size (see Statistics Canada 2003 5, 6, 18)

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Sub-Contracting System and Women Workers: A Study of Mica-Manufacturing Industry of Jharkhand

Molly Chattopadhyay

This article presents organisational structure of mica-manufacturing industry, changes in the organisation after the fall of the industry, and sub-contracting relationship between the agents therein The survey of mica-manufacturing industries of Giridih in Jharkhand shows that sub-contracting system helps in depressing daily wage rate for both male and female workers But female workers are most vulnerable due to patriarchal values that distinguish 'male jobs' from 'female jobs', thus reserving unskilled jobs for women Consequently, female workers are grossly underpaid than their male counterparts

[Keywords daily wage, division of labour, mica, sub-contracting]

Introduction

This article examines sub-contracting system in mica-manufacturing industry where large numbers of women workers are drawn into different forms of production The questions that are sought to be answered here are (i) How is the mica-manufacturing industry organised and what forms of production exist in it and how are they related? (ii) Is there any change in this industrial organisation over time? (iii) What is the gender division of labour in the different forms of production? (iv) How does sub-contracting system affect daily wages, particularly those of women, and what is the gap between the minimum wage and the actual wage?

These questions are answered with the help of data collected as part of the project on 'Gender and Labour A Study of Mica Industry of Giridih' funded by the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata (Chattopadhyay 2002) The purpose of this project was to identify variations and changes in women's employment through an examination of different forms of production, particularly in the formal sector, to examine the effect of retrenchment due to fall in export of mica, unionisation of mica workers, the status of women therein, and its impact on women's bargaining power within the household The focus was on women workers, since women are an essential part of the production process in mica industry, and this industry was the largest employer in Jharkhand from the 1960s to the end of 1980s Fieldwork was carried out in April 2001 and again during November 2001–March 2002 For the purpose, all the twenty-three mica factories (listed in the register of Factory Inspectorate) were visited, 420 workers (210 male and 210 female), both currently engaged and retrenched, from four villages belonging to this factory sector were interviewed Moreover, intensive interviews were conducted with mica industrialists and trade-union leaders Since there is no official record on unregistered workshops and households working on putting-out system, a few of them were selected purposively

This article is structured as follows Part I describes the mica-manufacturing industry in Jharkhand, Part II discusses the forms of production and the structure of organisation of the industry, Part III analyses the changes in the organisational structure over time, and Part IV discusses the differences in the payment of daily wages and non-wage benefits between male and female workers, including gaps in payment of minimum wages and actual wages

I
Mica Manufacturing Industry in Jharkhand

India accounts for 75 per cent of the sheet mica produced in the world, and Jharkhand accounts for about 60 per cent of this output India is the second largest producer of mica in world, next only to the USA In India, mica is found mainly in Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh The mica deposits in Jharkhand are spread over an area of 2,400 sq km and are worked over by hundreds of concerns, though more than 60 per cent of the total production of Jharkhand is contributed by only a dozen concerns Jharkhand's commanding position was firmly established with the evolution of built-up mica or micanite that was produced by binding smaller size mica, usually thrown away as waste, into plates or boards

(commonly known as 'built-up mica sheets' or 'micanite plates') to desired size and thickness This process, known as 'splitting', gave birth to the splitting industry (Rajgarhia 1951 5)

The golden era in mica export was from 1960 to 1970 Since the 1970s there has been a gradual decline in the export, and this also marked the decline in mica production at the all-India level Between 1971 and 1999, the production of crude mica declined by 95 per cent, the number of mica workers declined by 95 per cent, the number of mica mines decreased by 83 per cent, and the number of mica mine workers declined by 97 per cent (see GOI *Statistical Abstract*)

Various reasons are cited for the decline of the mica industry in Jharkhand (a) the establishment of Mica Trading Corporation (MITCO),[1] (b) the fall of USSR, who was the bulk buyer of silvered mica, (c) the discovery of comparatively cheap synthetic material by USA, who was the bulk buyer of raw mica, (d) the closure of mines due to fall in export of mica products, which has given rise to illegal mining of mica (see Appendix I) These factors have resulted in large-scale retrenchment of mica workers

II
Forms of Production and Organisation of Mica-Manufacturing Industry

A form of production is essentially based on the type of relationship between the owner and the workers, and the type of production process carried out (Harris 1982 947) There are six types of production units [2] (i) large-scale factories, (ii) small-scale factories, (iii) local suppliers, (iv) dealers, (v) unregistered workshops, and (vi) household industries where home-based splitting is carried out

The industry consists of ten categories of people

1 miners who mine crude mica and sell it to local customers after semi-processing it,
2 local customers who sell it in turn to dealers after further processing,
3 manufacturing exporters belonging to large-scale factories,[3]
4 manufacturing exporters belonging to small-scale factories,[4]
5 merchant exporters who are not manufacturers, but sub-contract to unregistered workshops for processing and then export the finished products,
6 dealers[5] who purchase crude mica from legal miners mines or illegal mines (through local suppliers) and then sell it to local market after semi-processing,

7 unregistered workshops who semi-process crude mica (some of them process final products also),
8 household industry,[6] where home-splitters work under putting-out system and are mainly engaged in splitting of mica,
9 agents, and
10 retailers

These categories, however, are not mutually exclusive For example, the manufacturing exporter can also be a dealer Again, the same firm may have more than one production unit comprising of large-scale factory, small-scale factory and unregistered workshops

Interrelation between Different Forms of Production

The main comparison as regards sub-contracting is among large-scale factories, small-scale factories, unregistered workshops and household splitters in mica industry We shall discuss the extent of differences among these types of production units and their concomitant division of labour It is often posited that large-scale factories have a tendency to sub-contract out certain products or parts of a production process Apart from large-scale factories, merchant exporters, small-scale factories and dealers are all involved in sub-contracting Thus, sub-contracting has more forms than supposed

Like garment export industry (see Kalpagam 1994), there are two types of mica-manufacturing exporters (i) merchant exporters and (ii) manufacturing exporters in large-scale and small-scale factory sectors Merchant exporters are those who provide capital and technology to sub-contractors for processing of mica The final product is packed by these sub-contractors and sent to merchant exporters who, in turn, send it to shippers These sub-contractors are based in Giridih, and merchant exporters have their offices in different parts of India, but the shipping is done through Kolkata port

The number of mica manufacturing exporters in the large-scale factory sector is seven, all of them are exporters The manufacturing exporters purchase raw or semi-processed mica from the local market and then give shape to it in their respective production units Manufacturing exporters in the factory sector also sub-contract for processing of mica to unregistered workshops, thereby avoiding labour legislations Sub-contracting lends the factory sector unique opportunity to finish their product in time, even during strikes by workers Sub-contracting is advanced by the union leaders as the main reason for the repeated failure

of strikes by mica workers in the 1980s At times, large-scale factories sub-contract bulk orders to small-scale factories

There are at least thirty-two mica units in the small-scale sector as per the records of the District Industrial Centre, Giridih Small-scale factories export mica products (such as split mica, fabricated mica, mica washer and block mica), sell in the internal market, and supply finished products to large factories Manufacturing exporters in small-scale sector also sub-contract to unregistered workshops for processing

Apart from these, there are forty-eight dealers in Giridih who purchase raw materials from mines and semi-process it before supplying it to manufacturers Semi-processing involves cutting of raw mica into six-inch size pieces Mica is purchased from illegal miners or from leased and government mines Miners (all male) of illegal mines sell crude mica at Rs 4 to 50 per kg depending upon the quality of the product The miners of legal mines sell the same to the dealers The rate is higher by 50 Paise per kg compared to rates of mica produced in illegal mines Before selling, female workers clean these and cut these into specific sizes This job of cutting is different from cutting in the factory Here, the large chunk of raw mica is cut into six-inch size pieces, in the factory, cutting is done according to specification The female workers are daily wage labourers who are paid Rs 22 per day Local suppliers sell the cut mica to dealers who semi-process it These dealers also employ casual labourers The main job performed by dealers is to dry and cut large-size mica into prescribed sizes, then supplying them to manufacturers in Giridih The dealers can sell in the internal market anywhere in India Dealers often sub-contract to unregistered workshops for final processing and then deliver the processed mica to merchant exporters

Information on the number of unregistered workshops is not available The dealer supplies technology and inputs to the unregistered work-shops These workshops make finished products, which are collected by the dealers personally and deposited with the exporters Large-scale factories and small-scale factories employ mica sardars[7] with or without inputs for preparation of mica washer, heating elements, etc in the unregistered workshops In case of selling within internal market, packing is done by unregistered workshops There are two types of unregistered workshops those that employ hired labour, and others in which the owner is the producer In the former, the owner has access to capital and he supervises hired labour He hires di-machine at Rs 1 per day for the preparation of mica washer He pays Rs 22 to male workers for preparing mica washers and heating elements and Rs 15 to female

workers for splitting Child labourer (male) is employed at Rs 3 three per dozen for wiring of heating elements

Mica splitting in Giridih is a household industry under the putting-out system There is no record of the number of persons employed in this household industry At present, few home mica-splitters are surviving, though the mode is continuing Usually, factory owners send a mica *sardar* with two to three kg of mica to village women for splitting and eliminating stained mica (locally called picking) at Rs 3 per kg He will pick up the split and waste mica the next day There are also some unregistered workshops from where women pick up raw mica from mica *sardar* and, after splitting, hand it back to him In either case, the rates are same, the difference is in the mode of collection

There are agents selected by exporters to look after the purchase of crude/semi-processed mica from miners and the transporting of final products to shippers The retailers are connected only to the unregistered workshops The owners of unregistered workshops (who employ hired labour) purchase mica blocks from the dealers These blocks are then split into required forms by female labourers The split mica is then processed by male labourers into mica washers and heating elements as per retailers' specifications Retailers personally collect these finished products Self-employed producers of the unregistered workshops, however, are largely dependent on factories for the supply of raw materials and technology If they can accumulate capital, they sell the products to retailers, otherwise their sale is limited to the factories

There exists fairly intensive sub-contracting relationships between different types of firms, and this is a salient feature of the mica industry Sub-contracting between firms occurs in various forms *horizontal sub-contracting* consists of contracting out production without providing raw materials, whereas *vertical sub-contracting* includes providing raw materials and other inputs (Beneria and Roldan 1987 34-35) In mica industry, both horizontal sub-contracting and vertical sub-contracting are relevant In horizontal sub-contracting the large factories distribute work to small-scale factories, unregistered workshops and dealers without an intermediary and without raw materials In vertical sub-contracting, a jobber connects a factory with workshops with inputs There is also the mixed link both large- and small-scale factories sub-contract directly to unregistered workshops without inputs, and also assign mica *sardar* with inputs to sub-contract to unregistered workshops and home-based splitters Products made by large-scale factories are much more standardised than those of small-scale factories, unregistered workshops and household industries The former usually make larger batches of

standardised production To keep the number of labourers at a minimum level and to depress minimum wages, raw materials and semi-processed mica are sent to unregistered workshops for processing In small-scale factories, the product range is usually limited to two or three products In unregistered workshops also two or three products are made In household industries, female members carry out only one part of the production, that is, splitting of mica

III
Changes in the Organisation over Time

As stated earlier, the decline of mica industry started in the 1990s, primarily due to the fall of the Soviet Union and the closure of the Mica Trading Corporation This has had repercussions on the organisation of the industry Those who are merchant exporters now were manufacturing exporters earlier The number of merchant exporters is small After the fall of the mica industry, the manufacturing exporters closed their factories, shifted to other business in other parts of the country, leaving the mica business in the hands of sub-contractors

From the Registry of Factory Inspectorate it is gathered that there were sixty-six large-scale mica-manufacturing factories Gradually, with the decline of the mica industry, only twenty-three factories are surviving Out of these twenty-three factories, the turnover of only seven crosses Rs 2 crores annually (as on 31 March 2004) Other sixteen factories are relegated to the status of small-scale factories The list of mica-manufacturing units in the small-scale sector since 1974 available with the District Industrial Centre shows that there were 242 mica units At present this number has come down to twenty-five Moreover, the number of dealers in Giridih who purchase raw materials from mines and semi-process it before supplying to manufacturers has come down to forty-eight from 240

Officially, it is not possible to know the number of unregistered workshops and households engaged in the industry The preparation of loose splitting used to form a sort of cottage industry in the district of Giridih, employing more than 1 5 lakh labourers during the 1960s–1980s These splitting were manufactured through contractors, or through the manufacturers' own distributing centres, commercially known as 'home splitting centres', set up in different villages Mica from the main factories was sent to these centres, from which the random-thickness blocks were issued to the labourers in the village, who were locally known as 'home splitters' A mica *sardar* used to distribute raw

mica among splitters and, after one week, split mica and waste mica were deposited with him These were sent to the respective production units Mica was taken by these home splitters to their homes nearby, where they manufactured splitting during their leisure hours After completing the manufacture of the entire bulk, they used to bring it back to the distributing centres, deposited the splitting, and took fresh issue of blocks (Rajgarhia 1951 160-61) Until 1980, this was the feature With the decline of the industry, the number of household industries has come down to a few hundred only

Thus, the decline of the mica industry has hit hard all the agents in the organisation Large-scale sector and small-scale sector declined by 90 per cent and the number of dealers, by 80 per cent The number of unregistered workshops and household industries has also declined What is the impact of the collapse of the mica industry upon the sub-contracting system and on its workers, particularly women?

V
Gender Division of Labour

Production Process

The processing of mica is entirely dependent on hand labour, and no power-driven machinery worthy of mention is used in a mica-processing factory This peculiar feature of the industry necessitates a large and stable labour force and adequate and careful supervision The entire process comprises of a series of operations in which a piece of mica passes through a number of hands before it is finally packed for marketing The waste factor is of such vital importance at every stage of the process that the greatest vigilance is required throughout (*ibid* 134) The production process is organised in the following way Semi-processed mica is purchased from mica mines and also from local market Semi-processing involves cutting large chunks of mined mica into six-inch size pieces and picking unstained pieces from the stained ones From semi-processed mica, good quality mica is selected by a group of women workers This is called picking Then another group of women will split these into fine pieces by using knife As per order, split mica will be cut into size by a group of men Excepting picking and splitting, all other jobs – namely, checking, passing, metering, binding, fabricating, preparing condenser, etc – are done by men Silvering[8] has been almost stopped, only in one factory one woman does silvering, and in another factory women are allowed to do capacitor testing and

silvering In powder factories, both men and women do screening, but mostly it is women's job A brief description of gendered division of labour is given in Table 1

Table 1 Distribution of Division of Labour by Sex in Mica Factories of Giridih

Name of the Factory	Division of Labour	
	Female	Male
G Roy Private Ltd *	Picking	Screening, Packing
ICR*	Silvering, Assembling, Capacitor testing	Punching, fabricating, Checking, Metering, Binding, Parting, testing, Moulding, outgoing quality control
Metros	-	Passing, Pressing, Checking
MMTC	-	Passing, Pressing
Anjana Minerals*	Splitting	Punching, Sorting, Checking, Cutting & Packeting
Ratan Mica*	Splitting, Silvering	Sorting, Fabricating, Checking & Packing, Condenser, Thickness
CMR*	-	Sorting, Fabricating, Checking & Packing, Condenser, Thickness
Jai Mica	Splitting	Cutting, passing, Checking
High-Rise	Picking, Clearing	Weighing, Lifting, Replacing
Mica Manufacturing	-	Fabrication
Ruby Mica*	Splitting & metering	Cutting, Passing, Grinding
Biswanath and Co	Screening, Packing	Sorting, Passing, Binding. Di punch
R P Tarway	Screening, picking and splitting	Packing
K R Modi	-	Cobbling, checking, packing
Sitaram Rajgariah*	Splitting	Fabricating, Packing
Vinayak	Picking	Packing, Machining
Sankar	Head loading, picking	Screening, Machining, Packing
Paresramka	Cleaning, Picking	Machining, Packing
Swetmal	Picking, Screening	Sorting, Grinding, Packing
Prakash	Picking, screening	Picking, screening, grinding, weighing, loading
Mohan	Picking, screening	Picking, screening, grinding, weighing, loading
Gaurishankar	Picking and Screening	Packing
Shyam International	Drying, Packing	Grinding, Packing, Screening

*These are large-scale factories, others belong to small-scale factories

Source Field Survey, 2001

Contract system is prevalent in the mica powder factories The owner assigns one contractor to prepare mica powder and mica flakes Initially, he is shown the technique of pouring mica into the machine for grinding it into powder The by-product of mica powder is mica flakes Subsequently, the contractor sub-contracts to collect a particular number of male and female labourers Female labourers pick up unspotted mica and then both male and female labourers screen it After screening, male labourers put it into grinder Finally, male labourers pack mica powder and mica flakes I have also seen female labourers do the packing In all the mica powder factories it is the women who head-load mica from the factory gate, where the truck carrying it stops, to the factory premises

Let me examine the division of labour associated with different forms of production Under this heading I include (a) the extent to which ownership and production have been separated, (b) the different categories of labour used, and (c) recruitment of women in each type of production unit

In large-scale factories, ownership and production are completely separated In addition to production, which is carried out exclusively by wage labour, administration and management are extensive and stratified In small-scale production, the owner is often the producer as well The extent to which this is so varies with the size of the production units In unregistered workshops and household industries, the owner and the producer are coterminous, other family members assist the producer

The different categories of labourers are (a) permanent, (b) casual, (c) contract, (d) self-employed producers, (e) dependent producers, and (f) unpaid family members Permanent workers are those who have a relatively stable and secure contract and expect to work in the same factory for a long time and are protected by labour legislation Casual labourers are those who are recruited for a short-term basis and are not covered by labour legislation Contract labourers are recruited for certain days for certain amounts of work done and are paid according to the quantity of work done without being covered by any sort of legislation Self-employed producers own the workshop and organise all facets of production Dependent producers manufacture products based on the specifications of the enterprises or contractors Extending a helping hand to the main producer within household production units is unpaid family labour

There are systematic differences in the extent to which women are recruited into the different types of production units In the factory sector, out of 971 workers only five women are permanent, whereas fifty-seven males are permanent, 266 women are casual, as against 643

men (Table 2) Permanent women workers are all in large-scale factories, in small-scale factories, no women worker is permanent and all the women workers are casual In unregistered workshops, both male and female workers are casual where the owner is self-employed producer, and no worker is hired by the dependent producers In household industries, all workers are women, and girl children who work are not paid

Table 2 Number of Workers by Sex and Nature of Employment in Mica Factories

Sex	Causal	Permanent	Total
Female	266	5	271
Male	643	57	700
Total	909	62	971

Source Field Survey, 2001

In large-scale factories, women are never recruited as long-term wageworkers In both large-scale and small-scale factories, women are recruited as casual workers or contract workers The casualisation of work occurs where parts of the production process are sub-contracted to small units by large production units The seasonality of the raw material on which the industry is based influences all aspects of production including recruitment of casual and contract workers In unregistered workshops, women are recruited as casual labour The male head of the household can be characterised as self-employed producer In household production units (the putting out system), women's participation is total, with girl children working as unpaid labour

The decline of the mica industry has not changed the sub-contracting system substantially, the emergence of contract system in mica powder factories is the only new phenomenon, which is also highly exploitative for both male and female workers Sub-contracting system is continuing, but the fall has its negative impact on female workers The crisis in the industry has compelled the workers to surrender to the owners' conditions of recruitment in violation of labour legislation Female workers are worst affected firstly, there is no industry in Giridih, excepting six rolling mills, which is capable of feeding such a great labour force, secondly, ecologically, Giridih belongs to rain-fed area where agricultural activity is completely seasonal and, therefore, unable to sustain its labour force, and thirdly, during the golden period of the mica industry, a large number of females were allowed to do silvering,

which is a skilled job, but now the production of silvered mica has stopped completely, thereby forcing female workers to take up unskilled jobs The decline in export has hard hit home splitters, and all splitters are female, they are not getting orders and, even when they get orders, the rate is awfully low In what follows, we shall discuss the differences in wage rates and non-wage benefits between male and female workers in all the sectors

Wages and Entitlements

The workers in the mica factories are covered by various labour legislations like Factories Act, 1948, the Employees State Insurance Act, 1948, the Provident Fund Act, 1942, and the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 among others, while those in the non-factory sector have no such coverage Though all the factories are covered by various labour legislations, the terms and conditions of employment vary not only between factories, but also within the factories

The workers are wage labourers, though the nature of wage payment differs Only the management staff, driver and security men are given monthly salary All wage labourers get weekly payment (six days a week) on the basis of a daily wage rate

Minimum wage rate was never paid in the mica industry, excepting in the three largest mica factories In March 2001, the official minimum wage for unskilled workers was Rs 61 59 and, for semi-skilled workers, Rs 63 94, irrespective of sex However, on an average, the actual daily wage paid was as follows unskilled male workers, Rs 32 50, unskilled female workers, Rs 27 50, semi-skilled male workers, Rs 52 50, and semi-skilled female workers, Rs 37 50 Skilled male and female workers were paid Rs 52 50 uniformly (Table 3) It is seen from Table 4 that the percentage difference between minimum wage and actual age in the case of male unskilled workers is 47 2, unskilled female workers, 55 3, male semi-skilled workers, 18, and female semi-skilled workers, 41 This shows that there is wide variation in actual wages between male and female workers It is also seen that, in terms of percentage differences between male and female workers, the difference is much higher in the case of unskilled female workers, who constitute a large number of daily wagers

Women are never given a chance to do skilled job (see Table-5) It was reported that, as women possess 'nimble fingers', they are better suited for splitting than men Again, women with their docile nature, as perceived by the employers, are unable to do skilled job like cutting and

Table 3 Wage Rate of Workers in Each Category by Sex

Category of Work	Minimum Wage (in Rs)[1]		Actual Wage (in Rs)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Unskilled[2]	61 59	61 59	25-30	35-40
Semi-Skilled[2]	63 94	63 94	35-40	50-55
Highly Skilled[2]	-	78 94	-	45-50
Skilled[2]	59 94	59 94	50-55	50-55
Accountant[3]	1,980	1980	No female	2500 00
Manager[3]	No female	2304	No female	6000-7000
Clerks[3]	1400-1500	1400-1500	No female	1800-2000
Driver[3]	NA	1743	NA	1743
Darwan (Gatekeeper)	NA	1535	NA	1535
Mica powder (contract system)				
Unskilled	-	30-40[4]	-	25
Skilled	54-60[5]	-	30	-

Source Field Survey, 2001

Notes [1] Minimum Wage Rate has not been revised since 1995, only voluntary dearness allowance (VDA) has been revised (as per Notification No 7/MW - 1055/1999/sramoni/ 2250, dated 8 June 2000, the rate of VDA for labourers is Rs 18 94 per day, and for managerial staff, Rs 744 16 month), [2] Daily wage rate, [3] Monthly wage rate, [4] Rs 10 per 40 kg, [5] Rs 5 per 50 kg

Table 4 Percentage Difference between Minimum Wage and Actual Wage by Sex

Category of Workers	Female	Male
Unskilled	55 3	47 2
Semi-skilled	41 0	18 0

Source Field Survey, 2001

machining There is not a single women labourer who is engaged in skilled job and regularised Only in one factory five women are regularised, but they are all office staff

In the small-scale factories, the rate of payment for split mica is Rs 4 50 per kg In a day it is possible to split five kg of mica, earning an income of Rs 22 50 Male workers engaged in unloading, drying, packing, preparing washer, block mica, etc get Rs 35 per day

Table 5 Distribution of Male and Female Workers by Nature of Job

Type of Work	Female Workers	Male Workers
Skilled	Silvering, assembling, capacitor testing	Cutting, checking, passing, metering, binding, fabricating, condenser preparing, silvering, moulding, di-punching, sorting, pressing, thickness measuring, cobbling, assembling, capacitor testing quality control
Unskilled	Picking, screening, splitting, drying, head-loading, packing	Screening, packing, grinding

Source Field Survey, 2001

In the unregistered workshops, mica washers measuring 15 mm and 29 mm are prepared along with heating elements Where the owner employs daily wage labourers, females are paid Rs 15 per day for splitting and males are paid Rs 22 per day for producing mica washers Boys are employed for preparing heating elements and are paid at the rate of Rs 3 per dozen, a boy can make two dozens of heating elements per day

The wage rate of mica splitting in the household industry is Rs 3 per kg In a day, 1 5 kg of mica can be split by one person, so, on an average, the wage is Rs 4 50 per day (In the factory sector, women are paid Rs 20-25 per day, though the minimum wage rate is Rs 61) Other female members of the household are also engaged in splitting as unpaid labourers There are many households where the head of the household is running an unregistered workshop and the women members of the household are engaged in the splitting work

Non-Wage Benefits

Apart from differences in wages and the forms of wage payment, factories also differ on issues of non-wage benefits Under Factories Act, 1948 workers in the factory sector are covered by Provident Fund (PF) after 180 days, confirmation after 240 days of continuous service, Employees State Insurance (ESI) from the date of joining, and leave, bonus, festival advance and maternity leave These benefits are not available to the workers in the non-factory sector PF is available after 180 days of continuous service, but only three or four factories are providing 12 per cent PF to their workers Only one factory provided employment security to its workers after 240 days of employment All

other factories never keep any worker for a continuous period of 180 days While units with over twenty women workers have to provide a crèche, no unit had done so Similarly, no factory has canteen facility Provision of leave is as follows casual leave – twelve days, earned leave – one day per twenty working days, medical leave – fifteen days in a year for managerial staff and twelve days for workers Leave rules are not followed, no woman is granted maternity leave

Although all the factory owners said that all the workers are covered by ESI, interview with the ESI doctor revealed that only two or three factories have covered their workers under ESI Mica dealers do not cover their workers under ESI, mica powder mill workers are also not covered by ESI, because all of them are under contractors The pensionary benefits are extended only to permanent workers, majority of whom is managerial staff All the managerial staff said that they became eligible for pension after 10 years of service In the non-factory sector, labourers are not covered by any labour legislation

The sub-contracting system offers an opportunity to the factory owners to depress wage rates and to make huge profits Table 6 shows the rate of decrease of daily wages from Rs 61 59 to Rs 22 for males and to Rs 10 for females The rate of profit made by large factories is evident from the sale price of heating elements made by self-dependent producers of unregistered workshops With inputs supplied by the large factories for preparing heating elements, the rate is Rs 5 per dozen, in a day it is possible to make two to three dozen heating elements, amounting to a maximum earning Rs 15 per day However, the heating elements are prepared and sold to retailers at the rate of Rs 30 per dozen by self-dependent producers The cost of inputs being Rs 1 75 per heating element, the original price per dozen is only Rs 21 As unregistered workshops are unable to get bulk order from the buyers, they are largely dependent on factories for survival, though at a meagre rate

Table 6 Rates of Daily Wage According to Nature of Enterprise

Nature of Enterprise	Daily Wage (in Rs)	
	Female	Male
Large Factory	25-30	35-40
Small-scale Factory	20-22	25-30
Unregistered Workshop	15	22
Household Industry	10	-

Source Field Survey, 2001

Implication for Women Workers

Excepting permanent workers in large factories, there are varying degrees of job insecurity The highest relative degree of job security is found among male workers in large-factories A degree of uncertainty always remains Job security rests more on good personal relationships with the mica *sardar* and the employer It is seen from Table 2 that only 8 per cent of women workers are permanent, enjoying relatively stable and secure contracts in comparison with 92 per cent of male workers In other forms of production, neither male workers nor female workers have stable and secure contracts, rather they can be called long-term daily wageworkers In all forms of production, mica *sardars* function as brokers in gaining access to recruitment In all forms of production, job instability is inherent Women are capable of maintaining a working relationship with mica *sardars* only, while men are able to prolong their relationship with employers, supervisors, labour leaders and mica *sardars* as well Being a woman restricts her movement in reaching out to all the sources in gaining access to factory sector employment Although there has not been any substantial change in the degree of instability as between male and female workers, job instability for women workers is high and is coupled with violation of labour legislations

The role of technology in women's participation can be excluded from this discussion, as mechanisation and automation have not occurred in mica industry, excepting in two factories As the industry is solely dependent on hand tools and craft skills, women have access only to unskilled functions like picking and splitting of mica There is no variation in division of labour across different forms of production The division of functions between male and female workers is usually stringent and is sanctioned by patriarchal values The work of splitting is defined as unskilled, as women's work is seldom considered skilled The household production units are important loci of learning splitting This occurs mainly as unpaid family labour There are clear gender differences in the manner and functions in which boys and girls receive training Boys, as child labour, are paid whatever little it is, since it is considered apprenticeships to an all-round artisanal training, whereas girls are taught splitting, predominantly as unpaid family labour Despite the fact that splitting is indispensable to mica production process in all types of mica products, women are often considered secondary to the production process and are considered as unskilled workers

The thought of considering women's work as secondary and unskilled is reflected in the payment of minimum wages and fringe

benefits to women workers In no form of production are women paid the minimum wages and covered by social security benefits Male workers too are not paid the minimum wages, but if they are paid Rs 10 less than the minimum wage, female workers are paid Rs 20 less, though the working hours and workload are the same In the continuum from large factories to household production units, the rate of actual daily wage to unskilled workers decreases The range of decrease is from Rs 30 to 10 per day for female workers, and from Rs 40 to 15 per day for male workers (Table 6) Excepting in three factories, no worker, irrespective of gender, is covered by labour legislations Sub-contracting system allows violation of the Factories Act, and this has been so since the inception of the mica industry

V
Conclusion

Women's work in the mica industry is being 'casualised' on an extensive scale due to sub-contracting However, the effects on working conditions are clear (a) wages have been depressed because workers no longer come under factory legislation, (b) owners and exporters receive more profit, and (c) no minimum wages or fringe benefits are paid anymore Sub-contracting system encourages deprivation from rights and entitlements usually associated with factories act to all sections of workers, but women are made most vulnerable The main consequence of sub-contracting for production units has been that splitting is carried out in units, which do not come under the term 'factory' The study indicates that splitting is organised on a more or less daily recruitment basis by mica *sardars*, and in varying locations Splitting is the most labour-intensive part of the production process and all splitters are women This implies that sub-contracting of this part of the work affects a relatively large portion of women workers in this industry Precise percentage of women workers affected is difficult to give, as there are hardly any official records

The reasons firms give for sub-contracting production include factors in the production process as well as labour aspects Sub-contracting can help lower fixed costs (when subcontracting firms produce a few specialised parts), and transfers the risk of fluctuating production away from the main firm It also avoids organisation problems encountered by family business when it grows in size Finally it lowers labour costs and avoids labour conflicts (Beneria and Roldan 1987 38-39)

For both male and female workers, particularly females, it is very difficult to have any control over wage levels because (a) they are hired on a daily wage basis, (b) there are few other work alternatives that are acceptable to women, (c) there is high degree of competition among splitters, such that daily wage is lowered, and (d) externalising the work removes the relative protection which labour legislation gives to large-scale production

The extent of women's participation in the production units is often greater than acknowledged by either producers or owners of the production units The more 'casual' the labour relation, the less it is explicitly acknowledged Unpaid family labour is the category of labour most extensively denied Furthermore, women across various types of production units are generally recruited for more casual types of labour than men They are also quite explicitly denied access to apprenticeships, a major channel by which they could 'graduate' to more secure and better paying categories of labour

Notes

1 Mica Trading Corporation (MITCO) was established in 1972 for the purpose of canalisation of export of mica products The terms and conditions were that, for exporting mica products, sample of the product should be submitted beforehand to MITCO for determining its standard of quality Sixty per cent of the export should be canalised through MITCO and 40 per cent of the export can be transacted directly between buyers and sellers Gradually, malpractices regarding checking the quality of mica products for substandard material crept in Having 'proper' connections with the MITCO officials facilitated getting orders, whereas those lacking such connections and who were unwilling to bribe the officials were denied orders Another important factor was that MITCO never adjusted price fluctuations Individual businessmen used to supply according to specification of the purchaser and adjusted the price MITCO was merged with Mica Manufacturing and Trading Corporation (MMTC), a government undertaking, in 1992 With this direct export was permitted and the floor price was abolished

2 A production unit consists of one workplace under one ownership at a single physical location A firm is an ownership unit, which may include several production units (Kirkpatrick, Lee and Nixon 1984 3)

3 Registration with Factory Inspectorate is compulsory for units employing ten or more workers and using electricity in the production process, or twenty or more workers and not using electricity The non-factory sector refers to those units that are not registered with the Inspectorate of factories, and where factory legislations are not applicable A registered factory comes under the Indian Factories Act

4 The characteristics of small-scale industries are relatively little specialisation in management, close personal contact of top management with production, workers, customers, suppliers and owners, lack of access to capital through the organised security market, and often difficulty in obtaining even short term credit, no special bargaining strength in buying/selling, relatively close integration with the local

community through local ownership and management and dependence on nearby markets and sources of supply (E Staley cited in International Labour Office 1961 ch 1)

5 The unit of measuring thinness of split mica is 1 mm To get registered with the Inspectorate of Mica Mines as a 'dealer', one should be able to cut raw mica into 1 mm thin and 15 cm in width Dealers are authorised to sell mica plates in the internal market

6 A household industry is defined as an industry conducted by the head of the household himself/herself and/or mainly by members of the household at home or within the village, or only within the premises of the house where the household lives in urban areas

7 Mica *sardars* are jobbers They gather mica workers whenever a factory wants to recruit mica workers They are paid by the employers, and they also get a commission from the workers They fix up home splitters who will come to the factory or to the unregistered workshop for collection of mica blocks They carry mica blocks from factory/unregistered workshops to home splitters and deliver back split mica/waste mica to the respective employers

8 Silvering involves putting layers of liquid silver on both ends of mica blocks so that smooth conducting is ensured

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BOOK REVIEWS

Ashish Nandy in Conversation with Ramin Jahanbegloo: *Talking India* New Delhi Oxford University Press, 2006, xi + 149 pp , Rs 395 (hb) ISBN 0-19-567898-2

Ashish Nandy is one of contemporary India's leading intellectuals Defying disciplinary boundaries, he seamlessly engages with the world of ideas as psychologist, anthropologist, historian and philosopher This book is based on a series of five comprehensive interviews conducted by the Iranian Philosopher Ramin Jahanbegloo The conversations cover Nandy's ideas on a wide range of issues, such as, modernity, globalisation, violence, Indian traditions and culture, and Gandhi The interviewer questions Nandy in the context of his own Indian-ness, his affinity to and criticism of things Indian While the first interview foregrounds the development of his ideas in an autobiographical context, growing up in a Bengali Christian family in pre-colonial Kolkata, the subsequent four interviews systematically lay out the principle tenets of his thought

Nandy's analysis of complex contemporary issues incorporates sociological breadth, political and historical insight with psycho-cultural depth Coupled with his unstinting commitment to pluralism and the emic perspective, the corpus of his ideas brim with an intellectual vigour that is embedded in the life projects and preoccupations of ordinary people It is this connectedness to the quotidian that makes the book equally relevant for the academic scholar and the lay informed public

First and foremost, Nandy emerges as a true dissenter, a free thinker not belonging to any ideological camp He rejects Marxism and Hindu nationalism as by-products of colonialism He is suspicious of all ideologies, which often masquerade as defence against unacceptable emotions, personal inadequacy or paranoid fantasies According to him, ideology in South Asia is only skin deep and a thin veneer for sublimating inner violence Consequently, an authoritarian personality may predominate at the individual level, while public discourse may be liberal democratic He deconstructs the popular image of India as intrinsically tolerant and anti-

authoritarian, since in his opinion it is a highly feudal patriarchal society People' behaviour is moulded by family, caste, religious and regional affiliations than ideological convictions Such multiple identities may lead to multiple constructions of truth offsetting the atomisation of the individual and homogenisation of society that has taken place in the industrialised West

So, ruling ideologies in contemporary India (as also at the global level) like modernity, development and secularism do not escape Nandy's scathing criticism As he points out 'Development has come into the Southern world as an analogue of two processes modern science, wedded to evolutionism and the theory of progress, and modern colonialism, seeking legitimacy in a new civilising mission' (p ix)

Following Gandhi, he makes a strong connection between violence and development revealing the dark side of modernity that oppresses marginalised groups and communities Indeed, the most brutal aspect of globalisation is the systematic annihilation of people outside the capitalist economic order Central to Nandy's critique of modernity is the urgent need to preserve and respect tradition or rather traditions In this regard, he clearly states

> My concept of tradition is a celebration of the ordinary person and everyday life It is simultaneously a critique of the ideology of modernity in terms of which most attacks on the lifestyles and life support systems of ordinary people re-launched In this perspective, there is a clear political edge to the idea of tradition (p 62)

Indeed, tradition and modernity are not just oppositional categories as understood in the popular imagination Highlighting the distinction, Nandy says ' there is a tradition of modernity too Modernity is not contemporaneity It is what obtains today It has particular time and space specific meaning and cultural baggage It has clear linkages with changes that took place in 17th and 18th century Europe' (pp 64-65)

Modernity can only be called a tradition by those outside it not by the modernists themselves For them science, rationality and empirical validity constitute criteria of absolute universal truth There is no scope for true dissent in this framework and therein lies its potential for violence

Tradition is the accumulation of wisdom and experiences over generations that have been tested in life Local knowledge systems and practices have to be understood, negotiated and respected, even if they are after scrutiny rejected In addition to critical and instrumental rationality we need other kinds of critical awareness embodied in different traditions and legitimate space for passions and

emotions that are as powerful as reason Or what he calls 'an open dialogue between knowledge and feelings' (p 68)

Modernity is the ideology of the victorious, but Nandy is interested in the marginalised He states unambiguously

> I am concerned with the defeated systems of knowledge and modes of self-expression I try to empower them when they have been supplanted not so much by superior systems as by systems patronised by the powerful and the rich, backed by ideologies that are called patriotic, scientific or progressive (p 65)

Nandy talks at length about his journey from being a critic to embracing and developing many of Gandhi's ideas throughout the interviews For instance, he shares the latter's radical critique of science and industrialisation, and his endorsement of voluntarism and local communities as the mainstay of collective life Nandy notes that it is the urban elite that feels hampered by Gandhi's ideas and ideals, but rural India is still steeped in his charisma Capitalism has created many under-classes and conspicuous consumption has not only eaten away at the moral fabric of society, but also accelerated rates of crime and violence, particularly in urban areas Gandhi's theories of life embedded in ideas of self-sufficient communities, inter-dependence, local self-governance and moral righteousness may be the only anecdote to the manifold problems besetting humanity today

This book is highly recommended as a good introduction to the seminal ideas of Ashish Nandy The conversational intertwining of complex themes and erudite and provocative interviewing style render it highly readable and accessible to a wide and diverse readership

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Girish Kumar: *Local democracy in India Interpreting decentralization* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2006, 326 pp , Rs 450 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3533-9

This study is a systematic attempt at analysing the operation of democratic institutions, the influence of political decisions on grassroots level democracy, and the operation of power structure in the local democracy The nature of democratic decentralisation and the operation of fundamental principles of decentralised governance are brought out through a comparative study of four states, namely, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and West Bengal

Although abundant literature is available on panchayati raj system, democratic decentralisation, etc the book under review has

the distinct quality of presenting an empirical field study in the form of a reference book The overall frame of the book presents the following core areas the concept of decentralisation and panchayati raj, historic profile of panchayati raj, politics and panchayati raj, leadership attributes and determinants of elected representatives, people's participation in panchayati raj, and welfare measures and local democracy The book begins with the conceptual clarification of democratic decentralisation, it not only clarifies the concept, but also entices even the non-professionals to get into the core of the issues centring on the concept The grouping of panchayati raj system into first, second and third generation is a new perspective

Narration of historic events, tracing the central as well as state level political decisions on decentralisation, candid expression of the influences of high profile politicians in shaping the panchayati raj institutions would encourage any researcher to undertake similar studies and objectively present the facts In author's own words, ' given the dominant role of the union government in the federal system of governance (guided by the constitutionally – recognised supremacy of the centre), its contributions and failings cannot be overlooked' Noting the political realities of West Bengal and Karnataka, the author reiterates the fact that operation of local democracy needs political patronage from the ruling establishments in the respective states

The influence of caste on the panchayati raj institutions is an undisputed reality This study proves this fact with reference to all four states covered Development decisions devoid of political underpinnings, by and large, remain a difficult process in our country The second chapter, 'Regime Character, Governability and Panchayats An Overview', analyses the linkages between caste and politics, interest of political leaders and the system of governance Notwithstanding the fact that the gram sabha is the empowered body to take people-centred development activities, the conduct of this body is observed to be ritualistic, thereby negating the very principles of gram sabha The author has compared the views of the respondents who attended the gram sabha meetings with those who did not

Towards the end of the book, the author has analysed the roles played by panchayati raj in promoting education and health in rural areas However, he opines that the panchayats suffer from both extraneous and internal impediments problems that block the smooth delivery of development programmes The term democratic decentralisation will remain a misnomer unless the panchayats are freed from such problems

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Inge Hutter, N.V. Rajeswari, J.S. Hallad and B.M. Ramesh: *Child spacing and reproductive health in rural Karnataka, India From research to action* New Delhi Manohar Publishers and Distributors, 2006, 343 pp , Rs 875 (hb) ISBN 81-7304-714-6

Child spacing, a natural phenomenon endowed through post-partum amenorrhea, has become a problem for scientific study ever since population growth has been identified as a hindrance to social and economic development Although the primary focus of population policy is to reduce child birth, spacing has been added to its dimension in order to promote child survival as one of the strategies for population control Unless the survival of the 'children born' is ensured, it is difficult to convince parents about the need for birth control Supporting the view of child survival as a positive strategy, the authors of this volume have focused on child spacing in a micro community in Dharwar taluk of Karnataka State

Instead of addressing the problem of child spacing directly, the authors have preferred to deal with it as part of an orientation to reproductive health career of women to its readers The book deals with the issue of reproductive career of a woman from menarche to menopause and their social components One important issue missing in the career is childlessness or barrenness Childlessness affects women adversely and how Dharwar women look at this issue would have been interesting to know

The book's approach is both demographic and anthropological, as the authors are drawn from both the fields of knowledge In recent decades, demographers dabbling with population statistics have realised that mere quantitative information without qualitative content is less useful in population control Hence, the importance of collaboration between demographers and social anthropologists in explaining demographic phenomena through qualitative studies Viewed in this light, the present work is a successful effort towards understanding child spacing

The presentation of research findings is excellent, and the work makes easy reading both for the expert and for the lay person Nevertheless, experts may not find anything new or unknown in child spacing in India Known facts are confirmed in this study through a systematic and well-done research At the same time, there is the surprising information that women in this area prefer to have their first child after thirty-one months of the consummation or marriage The general expectation of parents and parents-in law in South India is that the marriage should end up in child birth at least after twelve months after consummation If this does not happen, the daughter-in-law is either sympathised with or cursed according to the social orientation of her husband's family Motherhood is so precious and prestigious that every woman prays to be honoured as a mother as

soon as possible in order to avoid the wrath of older women and/or of in-laws But, in this study, even younger women aged less than 19 years preferred twenty-nine months between marriage and the birth of the first child This finding needs verification

On the basis of ground reality brought out by this research and on the researchers' own understating of the social milieu in which child spacing should occur, they have devised a strategy of action for conveying the desired messages to the community for action Action taken towards this end is well explained and a few samples of the write-up, flash cards and images developed are given Such information is very useful for future action researchers working in similar action projects in India and other developing countries

New comers to demographic research will find this book useful to launch an action research of their own, as detailed methodological approach is presented in an easily understandable format

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Jasbir Jain (ed.): *Narrative of the village Centre of the periphery* Jaipur Rawat Publications, 2006, 302 pp , Rs 595 (hb) ISBN 81-316-0008-4

This collection of twenty-two essays primarily looks at the literary and filmic constructs of the village Based on analyses of litterateurs' perceptions and personal accounts as embodied in various literary genres, contributors to the volume discuss issues such as romanticisation of the pastoral idyll, Gandhian movement and the idea of the village, rural political activism, gender segregation, the caste divisions, the economic exploitations, and village as an organic community and a place of harmony, with belongingness and emotional bonding as its prime virtues As the volume is essentially in the form of seminar proceedings, there is a wide range of themes covered within its covers Indeed, this diversity has precluded any thematic coherence or the consistency of approach Even the short editorial introduction fails to impart a sense of purpose to the volume save rhetorical platitudes 'the village is placed on the periphery and it remains the centre of the periphery, effectively destabilising the very notion of a city centre, and dislocating the centre-periphery equation' (p 4) Such assertions hardly add anything to our understanding of the village either in historical terms or in terms of contemporary dynamics In what follows one can do no better than listing the contributors and their contributions in bare outline

Surprisingly, Anisur Rahman's essay on Kajri explores connections and continuities between the folk and the classical forms and is not concerned with the village as such Renuka Pamecha examines aspects of village politics as it moves from passive reception to active participation Santosh Gupta takes up transformation from reform to revolution as portrayed in fictional work, while Awadesh K Singh focuses on such novels that depict crisis situations Concentrating on the representation of the peasant, Ameena Ansari enters the literary world of Premchand Bandana Chakravorty compares Sarat Chandra Chatterjee's *Palli Samaj* and *Abhagi ka Swarg* Usha Barde locates women in the rural context whereas Veena Jain compares Premchand and Limbale to place the dalit question within a comparative framework Madhuri Chatterjee invokes memories of the pastoral past with reference to Bibhutibhushan Chattopadhyay's *Pather Panchali* Neelum Raisinghani privileges the genre of regional novels, particularly Phaneeshwar Nath Renu's *Maila Anchal* Vrinda Mathur comments on the depiction of fairs and festivities in Hindi films

Some contributors dwell on the theme of Partition and its aftermath Sarojini and Rama Rani Lall pick up Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* In a similar vein, Urmil Talwar and Avinash Jodha foreground Rahi Masoom Reza's *Adha Gaon* Jasbir Jain brings out regional differences effected through landscapes by selecting four novels from different locations Buddhadeva Guha's *Kojagar*, Krishna Sobti's *Zindaginama*, Reza's *Neem ka Ped* and Thoppil Mohammed Meeran's *Seaside Village* Jessy Mani narrates the life in a fisher folk's village through her analysis of *Chemeen* and Prerana Bishnoi reflects on O V Vijayan's *Legends of Khasak* Preeti Bhatt highlights the kinship patterns and social ambience of the region through a discussion of David Davidar's *House of Blue Mangoes* Supriya Agarwal offers diasporic analysis of the past by focussing on Ashis Gupta's *Dying Traditions* Sonu Shiva's essay on *Gaon ka Aadmi* probes interesting set of issues the nature of outsiders' relationship with the village, the nostalgic quest for roots and the fluctuations in the urban-rural relations Likewise, Kumool Abbi's 'Interplay of Rural Social Change, Urban Middle Class and Filmic Depiction Recovery of the Village in Popular Hindi Cinema' is a well-written piece and displays adequate familiarity with the literature in the field

In a way, the volume presents myriad narratives of the village and 'the journey it traverses from region to region, from time to time, and from perspective to perspective' (p 6) It reveals the centrality of the village to multiple visions of change, development and national progress It is this variety and multiplicity that one discerns in village-based/village-centred novels Thus, novels like Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance* and Shanta Rama Rau's *Remember the*

House employ a narrative of the village that is complex and multi-layered and use village as raw material for the nostalgic recovery or the portrayal of oppression In some novels, the village turns out to be a site of nationalist activism where city-bred finds their purpose of life Also, such city-bred protagonists act as negotiators between national politics and the village awakening like Murthy in Raja Rao s *Kanthapura* Village could equally be a refuge or a place of exile Nirmal Varma's *Antim Aranaya* portrays village as a place of peace and serenity, whereas in Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve,* the village ends up being a place of exile as villagers move out in search of employment Novels like Gurdial Singh's *Parsa* celebrates village as a source of revolution questioning the hegemonic power of the landlords In Reza's *Adha Gaon* and Intizar Husain's *Basti* village simply happens to be a homeland, a place of birth In Meeran's *The Story of a Seaside Village,* the village appears to be in confrontation with modernity However, in the case of dalit writings such as Baby Kamble's *Jeevan Hamara* and Limbale's *Hindu and Narvanar,* village life is rendered as a formative experience for the protagonists concerned

The book should be read not for what it has actually accomplished but as a promising gesture towards an underdeveloped field of enquiry the use of vernacular literature for social scientific analysis The discourse on the Indian village need not remain confined to the colonial land revenue and settlement reports or ethnographic monographs The vernacular literature – innumerable short stories, novels and other genres – too contain accounts of the Indian village in all its richness and variety Sadly, so far professional sociologists have generally been indifferent towards tapping such literature concerning the village

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John Harriss: *Power matters Essays on institutions, politics, and society in India* New Delhi Oxford University Press, 2006, xii + 314 pp , Rs 595 (hb) ISBN 0-19-567897-4

The book under review assumes importance by tying articles on diverse subjects with one common string, namely, power Although dedicating major part of the book to the power structure in agrarian relations and to economic institutions of rural society, John Harriss also reflects on the existence of power relationships in political processes, state-society nexus, developmental strategies, and business ventures The ten articles in this book are divided into two broad

sections, namely, 'Institutions and Power' and 'State and Society' All these articles included are either reproductions or revised versions of articles presented or published elsewhere during 1977-2005 Except for one article, where Harriss refers to Sao Paulo and Mexico City, all the other articles are focused on India Although in all articles he emphasises on power embedded in class relationships, he critically examines the relationship of class with religion, caste, and kinship

The study of changes in the nature of agrarian relationships finds considerable importance in this book Harriss' observations are based on primary data collected by him at various points of time from Birbhum district of West Bengal and from North Arcot (now Tiruvannamalai) district of Tamil Nadu With reference to Birbhum district, he concludes that, despite changes in agrarian relationships, local power structure, defined in terms of economic power (relying on control over productive resources, especially land) and social power (relying on values and ideas about status), have not been seriously threatened over time At the same time, merchant capital fuelled by possibilities for speculative profit has continued to dominate agrarian economy

With reference to North Arcot district, Harriss strongly comments against introduction of new agricultural technologies through Green Revolution This, according to him, has exposed the farming communities, particularly the marginal farmers to the vagaries of market economy He feels that it has increased the need for capital and thereby the dependency on money lenders Expansion of capitalism in agriculture has also resulted in the drain of resources from countryside to the town This, according to Harriss, is a major cause of underdevelopment of agrarian economy and persistence of poverty in that region Given this, it is not clear as to why he suggests a technocratic intervention in agriculture in the context of West Bengal

Harriss observes that strong representation of lower castes/ classes in the political regime results in a direct approach to poverty reduction through investments in education, health and food subsidies, and through successful confrontations with local landed power in course of land reforms He concludes that patterns of public action are determined by balance of class power and the character of party systems in different states His data extols the success of the Leftist government in West Bengal in confronting local landed power at one point of time However, Harriss may wish to consider exploring the present situation where many supporters of Left Front government themselves hold exploitative power positions

Harriss opines that villagers give importance to cultural entities like caste, religious ideologies and kinship in constructing class relationships Therefore, he feels the need for deconstructing the

notion of class in order to develop an alternative approach between economism and postmodernism in understanding the nature of stratification in agrarian society Observing Harriss' consistent emphasis on economic variables, I suppose that his deconstructed notion of class would also prioritise economic parameters over others in understanding stratification If so, the applicability of such a concept may be questionable, given the important role played by other bases of stratification

Harriss has undertaken an interesting analysis of power relationships existing in Indian business scenario by studying the changing role of trust He observes that caste influences social networks existing among entrepreneurs Personal distrust arising out of the presence of different social networks among people from different castes may constrain co-operation At the same time, he opines that business relationship between firms of unequal size is based more on power than on trust Harriss also observes that, in family business, there is a move away from heavy reliance on selective, personalised trust to reliance on institutionalised sanctions and incentives

Harriss criticises the application of apparently progressive concepts like participation, decentralisation, civil society and social capital According to him, even though these concepts are advocated as tools for empowering poor people, differential power relation is embedded in all of them He points out that, while civil society is often advocated by many as an alternative to mainstream politics, participation in civil society is mainly restricted to more educated people Poorer people generally have to depend upon political parties to cater to their needs and interests

Overall, this book proves to be a useful text for understanding expressions of power in the Indian context

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Mridula Mukherjee *Colonializing agriculture The myth of Punjab exceptionalism* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2005, xxvii + 209 pp , Rs 420 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3404-9

The book under review has tried to corroborate the thesis of a general development of underdevelopment during the age of colonialism by making a comprehensive study of the agrarian economy of colonial Punjab It is based on extensive data collected from government archives and private papers from India and Britain, and from village surveys, farm accounts and family budgets Contrary to the colonial

discursive construction, Mridula Mukherjee argues that Punjab was neither 'a favoured child of the British government' nor an exception to the general run of colonial underdevelopment, but exhibited, like other regions of colonial India, including its supposedly polar-opposite eastern provinces of Bengal and Bihar, features typical of colonial underdevelopment

Mukherjee substantiates her thesis by detailing the all-important facets of agrarian economy To begin with, she reflects on the system of taxation She argues that the colonial government implemented an extremely harsh system of land revenue by ignoring the issue of costs of cultivation including the minimum subsistence required for the reproduction of the peasant family labour, and taking the actual rent paid by the tenants to the landowners as equal to economic rent and, thereby, overlooking the rack-rent character of the actual rent Furthermore, it exaggerated the value of the produce by estimating it on the average price of the whole year and not on the actual price received by the cultivators Therefore, the land revenue always remained at a very high level, and it either consumed almost all surplus or, in many cases, cut into consumption by being larger than surplus Besides, since land revenue was a tax on land and not on the landowners, it was heavily biased against the small-holding peasants, as they could not pay the rent as their total income was very small The prevailing canal rate or water rate, which was almost equal in amount to land revenue, aggravated this ruinous situation for the peasants The system proved worse for the tenants who were quite sizable in numbers and used to cultivate nearly half of the total land, because they also paid the landlords half of the land revenue and water rate as rent in addition to paying half share of the crop

Mukherjee observes that the system of land revenue pushed peasants including tenants into indebtedness Given their lower incomes, even the smaller amount of debt represented a much heavier burden on them Indebtedness led to the massive alienation of land from peasants to moneylenders The government tried to restrict this process by setting up co-operative and credit societies and by prohibiting the sale of land to 'non-agriculturists' or *sahukar* by the 'agriculturists' Nonetheless, this policy decision made agriculturist moneylenders more exacting who, unlike *sahukars*, wanted the indebted peasants to be reduced to a state where they would give up their land The co-operative and credit societies did not care indebted peasants and tenants, they actually strengthened the position of the upper section of the peasantry

Mukherjee opines that commercialisation of agriculture impacted peasantry differentially in class terms At one extreme, there were the peasants, including tenants, who were at the receiving end by being forced to buy back their own food items at higher off-season prices and to ingest a steep increase in the costs of production At the other

extreme, there were the landlords and moneylenders who immensely benefited because they did not bear the rising costs of cultivation, but only reaped the profits of increasing prices of agricultural produce A sudden and heavy fall in prices of agricultural produce and almost no decline in the land revenue and water rate during the Depression years brought more misery to the peasants and tenants

Mukherjee argues that leasing out land was clearly preferred to direct cultivation through wage labour because of the deterioration of the terms of tenancy resulting into greater returns from the former relative to the latter Small peasants and landless leased in land primarily for optimising the use of their family labour Landlords always commanded the situation and forced tenants to persist with kind rent and extra-economic services, and did not allow even the process of commercialisation to turn share-croppers into agricultural labourers Although agricultural wage labourers constituted a sizeable class, the family labour remained the predominant form of labour throughout

Mukherjee observes that, unlike the direct cultivation, leasing out land along with usury and mortgage debt were a major source of capital accumulation However, regardless of the source of capital accumulation, the accumulating class did not make investment in agriculture on capitalist lines and found other spheres, particularly trade, money lending, mortgage and land purchase, far more attractive Those who were interested in agriculture such as small peasants and tenants were unable to generate a surplus for investment in agriculture The inability of the majority and the disinclination of the minority to invest in agricultural development were inextricably linked together by the wider structure of colonial underdevelopment

Mukherjee concludes that the empirically validated trends – rack-rented and indebted tenants and small peasants, concentration of land ownership, the emergence of parasite landlords, growth of uneconomic small-holdings, increasing tenancy cultivation on deteriorating terms, forced commercialisation, the degenerative forms of surplus appropriation or capital accumulation, lack of capital investment in agriculture and stagnation of productive forces – point to the absence of any sustained tendency towards the development of capitalism in agriculture in colonial Punjab Punjab, like Bengal and Bihar, threw up an agrarian structure which is usually identified as 'semi-feudal' Therefore, the contemporary agrarian differences in these states should be understood in terms of the break with the colonial past The Green Revolution appropriately exemplifies such a break in Punjab

Mukherjee has, like many other historians on this subject, selectively collected data to substantiate her thesis, but her treatment of data and presentation of arguments are systematic and superb The

book is a significant contribution to the Marxist historiography on colonial India

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P.K. Misra, K.K. Basa and H.K. Bhat (eds.): *M N Srinivas The man and his work* Bhopal Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Mysore Anthropological Association, and Jaipur Rawat Publications, 2007, 288 pp , Rs 550 (hb) ISBN 81-316-0059-9

A sense of nostalgia for Srinivas prevails in the minds of most of his contemporaries and students – the more fortunate ones who have had the opportunity to learn from him in person as also those who have had to learn solely from his writings The book under review brings together sixteen essays (including the inaugural address delivered by V K Nataraj) that express the collective sentiment of scholars who participated in a three-day conference organised by the Anthropological Association (of which Srinivas was one of the founder members) in Mysore in 2004 Apart from personal reminiscences about Srinivas, the essays presented here focus on his research interests, the concept of sanskritisation, and his understanding of caste, social change and social mobility

Oxford-returned Srinivas, as many of us know, joined the Maharaja Sayajirao University as Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology, first in Baroda and then at the University of Delhi with an agenda to promote excellence in teaching and research in the twin disciplines of sociology and social anthropology Based on Srinivas's, 'Social Anthropology and Sociology' published in the *Sociological Bulletin* in 1952, 'The development of Sociology and Social Anthropology in India' (with M N Panini) published in the *Sociological Bulletin* in 1973, and 'Sociology in India and its Future' delivered as Address in the 20th All India Sociological Conference, V Gangadharan focuses on the views of Srinivas on sociology and social anthropology advocating the integration of the two disciplines

Srinivas is fondly remembered by A M Shah, who represents his first group of students in Baroda, not only for his impact on the university community in Baroda but also for his impeccable teaching skills and emphasis on field-based research He supported the 'People of India' project of the Anthropological Survey of India, as K S Singh recalls 'right through all stages from conceptualisation to execution and analysis' He seemed convinced that the project would provide a database developed on field research among different

communities He also played a crucial role in setting-up the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya in Bhopal Kishor K Basa and G Jayaprakasan recount that, in establishing the museum, Srinivas endeavoured to bring tribes to 'mainstream' of society in India, recognise their contribution in the making of great tradition, overthrow elitism associated with museums, and raise public consciousness about the tribes

Srinivas's own decision to study the village of Rampura may be said to be the first of its kind in India, for, as P K Misra states, hitherto the anthropologists had focused on isolated communities There were, hence, no previous studies that Srinivas could follow S Gregory and Jancy F Gregory pursue the issue of Srinivas's identity in the study of the Coorg society They address the question, how far can it be said that Srinivas was studying his own or the other society

The position of the researcher in the field is cross-linked with research techniques s/he employs in the field, more so in the case of participant observation, which involves close interaction between the informant(s) and the researcher Panini explains that, for Srinivas, participant observation extended beyond data-collection stage in the field situation to one in which the researcher analyses the data – often in a comparative framework which, he believed irons out the biases and prejudices that unwittingly creep into the study R K Jain refers to Srinivas's candid confessions of his personal inability to gain insights into the lives of 'Harijans' and Muslims adequately, and adopting 'non-rational, aesthetic criteria in the selection of a particular village [Rampura] He brings to light Srinivas's feeling of being a hypocrite in agreeing with the views of the headman and Nadu Gowda while suppressing his own, "nagging sense of guilt" about visits to shut the informants from disturbing his privacy' (p 82) in light of the fact that he was trained as a positive functionalist under the tutelage of A R Radcliffe-Brown

Srinivas's contribution to village studies in India in a general sense and monographs based on study of some villages in a specific sense have been revisited by K Ravi, Jain, S B Konale and H K Bhat, and Rajatsubhra Mukhopadhyay with the intention of developing a critique as also of gauging the expertise of employing the understanding of social reality acquired from study of specific societies to draw generalisations on society in India

Srinivas's ingenuous concepts and ideas such as those of sanskritisation, westernisation, dominant caste, and vote bank of the 1950s, as his sharp critics would also agree, have acquired renewed significance in the present day Reviewing Srinivas's paper, 'Reflections on Caste', Ajit Kumar Danda challenges, among others, his position that acquisition of land and wealth by the new-rich castes under the British rule was concomitant with the process of sanskritisation and the demand for higher status for themselves He maintains

that the pressure for higher status was independent of the British rule Shah upholds that the concept of sanskritisation continues to be of relevance in explaining social mobility, more so in modern India characterised by multiplication of 'non-caste and even anti-caste Sanskritic structures and institutions' (p 135), and increasing westernisation, that seemingly challenge the concern for ritual hierarchy of castes This comes out clearly in the essays of P R G Mathur, and S A A Saheb and C Raghu who demonstrate the articulation of sanskritisation in the specific cases of non-Brahmin castes in Kerala and Scheduled Castes in Tamil Nadu respectively

A book on Srinivas is always a delight to read This one will call attention of those who seek to familiarise themselves with an overview of Srinivas's contribution to the disciplines of sociology and social anthropology in India and develop an insight into the framework for understanding social reality there The editors would have done well to include a complete list of Srinivas's writings for the benefit of those of us who seek to pursue his works intensively

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Ranabir Samaddar (ed.): *The politics of autonomy Indian experiences* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2005, 312 pp , Rs 360 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3453-7

The volume under review is a collection of ten papers divided equally between two parts I – 'Genealogy' and II – 'Practices of Autonomy' The first two papers in Part I discuss the theoretical perspectives on the issues relating to autonomy with reference to the history of the idea The remaining three papers discuss the question of autonomy with reference to the position of women in India, peace accords made by the Indian state, and international law Papers in Part II discuss the issues of autonomy in India with an ethnographic perspective

Ranabir Samaddar stresses on the need to distinguish between the concepts of 'self-government' and 'autonomy' The need for this distinction assumes significance in the context of a multicultural state as India where autonomy has become 'one of the fundamental principles reorganising society' He argues that through its constitutional provisions to meet the persistent demands for self-determination and a variety of peace accords, the state strives to keep the nation intact, and this makes the Indian experience most illustrative

The issue of autonomy has occupied the centre stage in the contemporary political and philosophical debates Pradip Kumar Bose identifies two questions as fundamental to this debate (i) is it possible to define autonomy in a coherent manner? and (ii) is there any theoretical justification for the concept of autonomy? He takes the position that the answer to both these questions is in the negative

Paula Banerjee observes that issues relating to women's autonomy were seen in the context of religion, community and personal laws by ignoring the points of individual rights or justice Her contention is that the question of women's autonomy gained significance in India only from the 1980s, after women led some successful movements Such movements approached the issue from the angle of women's position in law She raises the question whether the enactment of various laws over time has given autonomy to women or has further marginalised their position

On the whole, Banerjee's paper makes an interesting reading of the efforts made by the women at the political level since the colonial period Citing the case of Shah Banu and its aftermath, she highlights the influence of the community and religion on the efforts towards achieving autonomy by the women The thrust of her argument is that patriarchal forces deny not only social rights to women, but political rights as well, and that the 'law affects different women differently'.

Samir Kumar Das views autonomy as a 'space that is sought to be created within the realm of the state's institutions and practices' His arguments are based only on the intra-state peace accords between the Indian government and its 'adversaries' For him, the peace accords are mere instruments of the government by which the state tries to bring the various discontented ethnicities within the 'orbit of nationhood' He argues that the peace accords are not necessarily 'autonomy accords' because once such accords are clinched the promises of autonomy are relegated to the backstage

The Indian State adopted constitutional means to address itself to the issues of autonomy relating to its diverse communities Ashutosh Kumar examines these efforts in the context of the North-Eastern states and Jammu and Kashmir He maintains that the various constitutional provisions relating to autonomy have not really been practised, thus leaving the various regional problems unresolved in the country

The issues of self-determination assumed new dimension with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and stretched the debate beyond the right to self-determination in the context of colonial situations Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, while describing in brief the scenario at the international level, identifies three spheres in which the demands of autonomy have been articulated cultural, financial, and territorial Of course, he admits that the demand for territorial autonomy has always remained problematic

The paper on Jammu and Kashmir (Sanjay Chaturvedi) considers the question of autonomy from the twin perspectives of ethnicity and geo-political situation It traces the history of various attempts by the Indian state to negotiate the demand for autonomy keeping the territorial sovereignty of India intact The paper on Darjeeling Hills (Subhas Ranjan Chakrabarty) is a simple description of the history of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council and does not provide any conceptual insight

The paper on North-East (Sanjay Barbora) is focussed primarily on the autonomy demands in the Karbi Hills and the Bodos of Assam It does not offer any help in understanding the problem at the regional level and the title of the paper could have been more apt without the word 'North-East' The same holds good for the paper dealing with the situations in Tripura and Mizoram (Subir Bhaumik and Jayanta Bhattacharya) Both the papers discuss autonomy in the context of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India No attempt has been made in either of the papers to generalise the arguments at the level of the north-eastern region Barbora's paper, however, fills a gap by putting the Karbis and the Bodos of Assam in a comparative perspective

Ratan Khanabis, on the basis of his analysis of the Eleventh Finance Commission data, asserts that the fiscal basis of the autonomy of the local level bodies is still very weak in spite of the provisions of the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution

Samaddar's selection of papers discussing 'autonomy' from various perspectives would prove to be a useful reference book on the subject

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Ranjitha Mohanty and Rajesh Tandon (eds.): *Participatory citizenship Identity, exclusion, inclusion* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2006, 249 pp , Rs 550 (hb) ISBN 0-7619-3467-7

In a democratic polity, citizens' participation in the process of development is important However, due to deeply entrenched inequalities based on caste, class and gender, the marginalised sections of the society are often deprived of participation in the decision-making process of governance and development The book under review attempts to look at the issues relating to participatory citizenship from the vantage point of the marginal sections/excluded people in the society

The book is a collection of papers from a conference on 'Citizenship and Governance Issues of Identity, Inclusion and Voice' The contributors to this volume have explored issues relating to possibilities and problems of the inclusion of the marginalised sections Ranjitha Mohanty and Rajesh Tandon in their introductory article examine the conceptual issues of participatory citizenship They discuss various dimensions of inclusion and exclusion of identities

The four papers in Section I focus on the conceptual and theoretical aspects of citizenship participation Pointing out the need to delimit the meaning and content of citizenship, T K Oommen attempts to delineate it with reference to 'enabling and endangering orientation of citizenship' from the perspective of identity He suggests that the problematics of citizenship are to be viewed in its contexts and related contents John Gaventa's analysis of participation shows how, over the decades, there has been a shift in the meaning of 'participation' from beneficiary to active engagement by citizens in policy formulation Mohanty's paper throws light on various conceptual issues on citizenship Apart from attempting to establish linkage between citizen, participation and development, she also discusses various types of participation Surinder Shukla asserts that a modernising state requires developing a new mindset of 'facilitation, instead of control'

The five papers in Section II present empirical studies on citizen participation The marginalised citizenship identities of nomadic groups in Rajasthan have been discussed by Mandakini Pant She examines the initiatives of Mukti Dhara Sansthan, a grass-roots organisation towards mobilisation of the nomads Presenting case studies, Peter Newell discusses social responsibility and accountability of the corporate sector and highlights two key elements of accountability, namely, 'answerability' and 'enforceability' He also observes differences in the perception of the corporate organisations and of the people Manju Agrawal discusses women's role in grass-roots democracy and outlines how Mahila Samakhya in Uttar Pradesh facilitates active participation of women, and empowers them by creating awareness, providing information and enabling them to analyse the existing social structure Mariamma Sanu George highlights the gender dimension in the decentralisation process He spells out issues and constraints of gender mainstreaming in the decentralisation process in Kerala Dikshit Sinha presents case studies from West Bengal and points out how inclusion of the marginalised has become possible due to local self-government (panchayati raj), which has provided opportunities for them to participate in socio-political process

A blend of theoretical and conceptual issues with empirical case studies makes this volume interesting By looking at citizenship from

the perspective of the marginalised sections and pointing out the inherent complexities and contradictions in participatory process, this book makes the reader to ponder over the issues of civil society, citizenship and participatory development

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Smita Tewari Jassal and Eyal Ben-Ari (eds.): *The partition motif in contemporary conflicts* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2007, 381 pp , Rs 595 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3547-9

Edited by Smita Tewari Jassal, trained at Delhi University and teaching in US, and Eyal Ben-Ari at Hebrew University, Jerusalem, this collection of papers draws its studies principally from South Asia, Palestine-Israel, and Germany, East and West The first two foci relate to the editors' own backgrounds, and the third to the location of the conference behind this volume, in Halle, Germany The substantial editorial introduction turns on a series of eight conceptual rubrics under which most discussions of Partitions lie Partition may be seen, illustratively, as an *outcome* of historical processes or as the *cause* of later happenings, as an episode characteristic of *modernity*, as an event believed to be a *solution* of larger difficulties, and so forth In this Introduction and in the quality of a majority of papers, the volume offers good value for its price, though it is odd, for a volume published in New Delhi, with a Hindi-speaking co-editor, to find a slogan from the 1940s, '*Le ke rahenge Pakistan*', translated as 'Take Pakistan and stay in it' (p 82), 'We will, we will, wrest Pakistan' would have been more accurate

How did it happen? – that question concerning any of the Partitions is addressed in only one paper (Ben-Ze'ev), that concerns modern British cartographic activity in the territory of Palestine for a century until 1948 Claimed to be objective representations of the landscape, the author demonstrates that the maps produced 'remained structured by the inclinations, confabulation, and omissions of their creators' (p 100) The maps were intended to serve British imperial ambitions, but their value was priceless for Zionists in their project for buying up lands in Palestine from the less sophisticated, sometimes nomadic, Palestinians to whom the region had belonged. With 'legal rights' so established, the Zionists moved in with guns in 1948 to establish the initial version of Israel, which of course has been enlarged several times since

Most of the other papers address rather the question, How was it experienced?, and that stretches out to memories of violence (in one

case, Partition fiction), of negotiating oppressive regimes, and contemporary experience carrying echoes of Partition in Hindu-Muslim conflict (in Banaras and Bhopal) A key concept in much of this is that of 'borders of the mind', that is, the animosities carried in individual minds that affect day-to-day behaviour and experience, far away from any international border that a Partition as such might create (Sinha-Kerkhoff and Bal)

The Soviet occupation of eastern Germany, and the western powers' occupation of the rest, in the closing days of WW II led to the Partition of Germany, which was formally abolished only in 1990 Two papers on the German case concern ties of kinship and friendship stretching across the East-West border The German family has, of course, long been nuclear, but responding to the externally imposed Partition, extended kinship ties with uncles, aunts, and cousins, living across the border, gathered unusual salience In West Germany there were public campaigns to send gift parcels, at festivals and personal celebrations, to kin and friends in the East, as tokens of shared bonds, and these gifts were tax deductible For kin in the East, these packets were helpful, and they reciprocated, but their gifts were not materially important in the West After reunification, the need for these parcels declined, families in the East became more critical of the value of what they had been getting, and the whole complex of extended kinship ties collapsed rapidly (Dietzsch, Thelen) Matters were not helped by the fact that the easterners saw themselves losing much that they thought was their own to westerners – who made effective use of their greater wealth, their familiarity with West Germany's 'rational legal regime' (which was imposed on the eastern part), and their greater access to the advancing networks of power and influence Another paper extrapolates from the German experience to speculate on the prospects of Korean unification – concluding that the difficulties in the latter would be greater (Borneman)

Three papers concern Palestine-Israel, seen from the Palestinian point of view The state of Israel parcels Palestinians out into several categories with disparate 'rights', and we hear in these papers the voices of two sets those who live in refugee camps, outside Israel's formal boundaries, but who have to tackle draconian Israeli checkposts to earn a living, sometimes crossing borders illegally, and paying the price (Zureik, Gren), and those who are Israeli citizens subject to infuriating surveillance (Ghanim) Another paper reports on the attempts in an Israeli school, with mixed Jewish and Arab students, to organise some ceremonies so as to give students experience of the other side's symbols and practices in a positive environment (Bekerman)

Six of the fourteen papers concern South Asia Two are about the 'borders of the mind' in Banaras and Bhopal The story in Banaras is

about rattling the Muslims who have clambered up from being weavers to being modest merchants, and the modes of rattling range from rumours spread through Hindi newspapers to mob violence (Vasanti Raman) Bhopal was more complex In 1951, Muslims were over 55 per cent of the city population, in 2001 in a city that had grown, less than 21 per cent, largely compressed into the old city There, in the old city, in an area where many Muslim houses had given way for a major arterial road in 1972, a Durga temple was built, narrowing the same road again, in the teeth of resistance from Muslims and the administration this, of course, was the classic Hindutva strategy of appropriating space hitherto associated with Muslims (Ursula Rao) Two papers concern movement across the Bangladesh-India border, memories of the other land in another era, and contemporary tensions in Jharkhand and in Garo tribal country in Bangladesh (Sinha-Kerkhoff and Bal, Habibul Haque Khondkar)

Finally, two more papers on narratives of the Partition violence Michael Nijhawan's, focussing on Sohan Singh Seetal's largely ignored texts in Punjabi, and Alok Bhalla's reviewing the fiction arising from the trauma, laced with strong moral concerns echoing Gandhi and others I wish I had space to dilate on them!

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Sujata Patel and Kushal Deb (eds.): *Urban studies* (Oxford in India readings in sociology and social anthropology) New Delhi Oxford University Press, 2006, x + 486 pp , Rs 595 (hb) ISBN 0-19567839-7

This interdisciplinary volume on urban studies explores the historical, socio-cultural, demographic, geographical, economic, political and planning dimensions of Indian urban life In all, there are twenty papers by Indian and western scholars The papers are organised into four sections The Contemporary Urban Process, The Indian Metropolis, Urban Space, The State, Politics, and Collective Action, and Urban Culture The themes covered include life in the city and its relationship with industrialisation, urban inequality and class formation, and its ethnic and gender dimensions, urban infrastructure, governance and conflicts, ways of living and eating, forms of leisure and the influence of Bollywood, and issues concerning the informal sector, urban planning, slums, health, and sanitation

To begin with, Sujata Patel introduces the field of new urban sociology The most appropriate way to study urban phenomenon,

according to this school, is through the perspective of political economy This school has elaborated four processes that define and constitute the urban (i) the movement, concentration, and extension of capital over space and time processes that create urban forms, towns and cities, (ii) the contradiction between forces of production and relations of production-processes that create social conflicts and lead to the growth of social movements within the urban arena. (iii) the way power and ideology are arranged in and through the state and the way state organises these in order to intervene in the process of spatial reorganisation, and (iv) the way cultural representations are given meaning within the above dynamics According to this school, 'urban studies', which is interdisciplinary, historical and comparative, encompasses simultaneously the mode of production as it articulates in space, the structure and dynamics of power relations, and assessment of cultural processes The introduction also briefly covers the urban phenomenon in India, exploring in some detail colonial and contemporary urbanisation, state policies, the discourse on urbanisation, urban politics and urban culture

Rakesh Mohan traces the pattern of urbanisation in India in the recent past and analyses the emerging policy issues such as employment, development, migration, urban local governance, and housing He says that there is an urgent need to substantially increase urban infrastructure investment to sustain the demand of a modernising and industrialising urban economy The key areas for attention in coping with city growth are financing and management of urban development

Atiya Habeeb Kidwai evaluates the consequences of globalisation in the cities of the Third World including India In India, globalisation (post-1991 period) has led to the decline in industrial growth rate and capital goods sector, slowing down of the economy since 1996, reduction in employment, deterioration of labour market conditions, reduction of industrial wages, increase in per capita income, skewed distribution of income, decline in the power of organised labour, aggravation of poverty, and accentuation of wage and regional disparities She says that there is a need for theoretical reconsideration of the Third World city

> Restructuring and globalisation should not only be seen as economic processes but also as political and social processes Urbanologists should aim at finding out how these processes are so harnessed that their long-term societal outcome is not exclusion and marginalisation but promotion of economic development and efficiency, improvement of equity, reduction of poverty, and preservation of environmental quality

Ratna Naidu's paper, 'Dilapidation and Slum Formation A Study of Hyderabad', explains the role of political lobbying for declaring a dilapidated area as a slum The labelling of an area as a slum, according to her, is essentially a political decision taken as a result of political pressure Occasionally, areas which do not qualify as slums by any objective criterion have been declared to be so She has conducted a survey of the socio-economic characteristics of two settlements, one a dilapidated settlement in the Muslim-dominated walled-city area and the other a mainly Scheduled Caste and Tribe dominated slum area

Sujata Patel discusses the fate of the two projects of modernity led by the native bourgeoisie and the Maharashtrian working class Since the 1930s, Bombay's economy was dominated by the textile industry and its profits were reinvested in capital intensive industries like engineering, pharmaceuticals and fertilisers From the late 1950s, many of the sick textile mills were closed Globalisation since the 1990s has led to the establishment of multinational subsidiaries and burgeoning of service industries Shiv Sena, a political party started in 1966, initially adopted the slogan 'Maharashtra for the Marathi-speaking population In the 1980s, it resurrected itself in a new garb as a party of Hindutva ideology and succeeded in mobilising the elite as well as the populace Recent decades have witnessed concentration of ownership, inequities in land and housing, lack of improvement in housing and infrastructure, and instability coupled with cultural and economic deprivation

Kushal Deb examines the role of the state in the growth of Hyderabad city He observes that the Hyderabad Urban Development Authority (HUDA) the official agency in charge of planning and development within the metropolitan region of Hyderabad, has failed to control the growth of the city according to the master plan due to clash of interest between HUDA and the ruling political elite, overlapping of developmental activities by HUDA and other agencies, and the authority structure of HUDA

Even though the Introduction' gives an impression that the volume covers only the papers in the area of new urban sociology adopting the political economy perspective of Manuel Castells and David Harvey, some papers fall outside this realm A brief literature survey on urban India could have enhanced the importance of this volume The painstakingly edited volume is a valuable addition to the contemporary literature on urban studies

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T.N. Madan: *Images of the world Essays on religion, secularism, and culture* New Delhi Oxford University Press, 2006, xii +398 pp , Rs 595 (hb) ISBN 0-19-568113-4

T N Madan's *Images of the World* has appeared at a time when the debates on the significance of religion in the contemporary world are once again gaining ground As submitted by Madan in the Preface, the volume is a collection of essays that consolidate his thoughts gathered from a continuous exploration on the significance of religion, culture and society over many years now In fact, Madan shows that resilience of religion in the modern world has again challenged the Weberian predicament of religion as a dying phenomenon Thematically speaking, the book is divided into four broad areas The first area comprises essays that attempt to situate the debate on religion and secularism as it has been analysed by Madan himself over a period of changing social dynamics around the world and specifically in India The second area draws more upon empirical references in dealing with issues of ethnicity and religion The third area emphasises the various concepts that have emerged from diverse religious traditions in the Indian context The last section comes a full circle in attempting to locate the debate on religion within the private and the public domains

Drawing from the western intellectual traditions, the first essay in the volume takes us through the history and sociology of religion It brings out the oscillations between the Enlightenment's emphasis on modern science and the return of religion to the centre stage This points to a growing need for a philosophy of ethics rooted in god in an age permeated by technological knowledge This debate is carried forward in the next two essays where Madan deals with the themes of freedom of religion and secularism as a state principle The historical underpinnings of freedom of religion help us understand secularism as it came into being in the West This further explains the Indian context with reference to religion in the society vis-à-vis religion as handled by the state

Two of the most interesting readings in the volume are found in the second section where Madan tackles the themes of identity, ethnicity and religion That he chooses Bangladesh, Punjab and Kashmir for this makes it easier to understand how the combination of all the three themes has been used strategically for state formation in various phases of history The sacred and the secular coalesce to bring people together in their search for assertion of their identities and rights, thus making way for ethnicity to be used strategically The essay on Kashmir and Kashmiriyat emerges as a lament from an author – a Kashmiri himself – nostalgic about a lost homeland

The religious pluralism manifest in India's traditions is brought alive in the next section The first essay here makes a deep

impression on scholars of sociology of religion to understand the conceptual framework of religious experiences in the Indian context The next essay deals with the Hindu society with caste and family as its foundation Drawing from ethnographic evidence, Madan takes us through the everyday values and traditions a Hindu householder is engaged with in order to follow his faith In an insightful essay, Madan deals with death and religious traditions vis-à-vis the modern medical impingements upon the phenomenon of dying He contends that death, as one of the most natural aspects of the human world, has been robbed of its dignity in the modern world of medical science where life supports compete with each other to prolong life and delay death This is in opposition to traditional societies where death is a meaningful event in a person's life where freedom to die is akin to freedom to be born, both being natural cycles and, therefore, not a stressful experience as death is often made out be today

The last essay in this section is a culmination of the earlier ones where Madan emphasises the significance of religion in various ways In trying to analyse Weber's and Srinivas's work on religion, the essay brings out the importance of studying religion and the methodological concerns a scholar of religion needs to bear in mind The second last essay deals with Louis Dumont and his work on society in India and the West The last essay is of utmost significance for Madan here attempts to situate the debate of religion in the private and the public sphere He tries to put both the constructs within a contextual framework where they interrelate with each other rather than building differential categories around the two

Madan has touched upon almost all the conceptual underpinnings of sociology of religion in some detail This makes this volume a must read for all those interested in gaining a nuanced understanding of the society today with its constant tensions between tradition and modernity He has aptly called it *Images of the World,* thereby bringing out the importance of the human agency that constructs these images to make meanings of their different worldviews

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Tulsi Patel (ed.): *The family in India Structure and practice* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2005, 310 pp , Rs 380 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3389-1

The volume under review is a collection of articles published in *Sociological Bulletin* during the last five decades It is the sixth

volume in the series called *Themes in Indian Sociology* brought out by the Indian Sociological Society to celebrate its Golden Jubilee in 2001

The twelve articles in the volume are divided into three thematic sections In all 33 articles on the family were published in *Sociological Bulletin* during the period 1952-2002, and most of them (29) were published by the mid-1970s, which also shows the declining significance of the family studies over the years In recent years, however, due to greater transformation in society, the need for revival of family studies is gaining ground Tulsi Patel, in her Introduction, which runs well over twenty-five pages, raises some pertinent questions in this regard

Section I of the book deals with articles on the nature, issues and problems in research on family Khatri's article highlights that family has not received much theoretical and research attention in India and the approaches on family here are mainly historical-institutional with less attention on interactions patterns and relational aspects In his article, M F Nimkoff suggests that, in India, the studies of family trends are required, the social research on which can be done through methods like genetic or longitudinal among others

The conceptual understanding of the terms 'family' and 'household' and the debate on the myth and reality of the Indian joint family based on empirical analysis are the focus of articles in Section II These articles, particularly by I P Desai, show that Indian family sociology grappled with exploring the census figures that inferred that joint family in India is disintegrating following the trend of the western family Classifying families on the criterion of jointness 'with reference to residence, property and mutual obligations among the kin', Desai found higher proportion of joint families in Mahuwa town, the area of his study, than was shown by the Census figures Similarly, K M Kapadia in his study among students in Navasari town and the surrounding rural areas in Surat district of Gujarat shows that joint family pattern and the interpersonal relationships in the family were predominant in both rural and urban areas, in fact they were stronger in the latter

The works of some other authors in the volume also substantiate the point that joint family living continues to be prevalent in urban areas, particularly among business communities Saroj Kapoor's study on family and kinship among the Khatris in Delhi, Agarwala's work on mobile Marwaris in different parts of India and Acharya's article focusing on the community life of the migrant Gujarati Kansaras in Nasik, Maharashtra – all highlight on more or less a similar trend

Besides highlighting the point that structure of joint family is widespread in India and the sentiment of jointness continues to be stronger, these studies also provided conceptual clarity In his article,

A M Shah suggests that the phase of growth of the family in the delineation of the developmental process has received much more attention than the phase of dispersal and this is what his article, based on observations of family life in Gujarat, attempts to understand Lancy Lobo, in his study of household and family among Thakors in a village in north Gujarat, substantiates Shah's conceptualisation Delineating the household and family in developmental process, Lobo concludes that the upper stratum has a greater incidence of filial as well as fraternal joint living than the lower

Other authors, like Edwin Driver, William Morrison and Aileen Ross, in their articles however, hold the view different from most of these scholars They, in fact, reveal that urbanisation and technological change have brought about enhanced individualisation of values, attitudes and new ways of life influencing family living Whereas Driver in his study of family structure in Central India indicates that the joint family occurs rather infrequently, especially in the city and towns, Morrison's study of family types in Badalpur village of Maharashtra concludes that the nuclear family appears both among the better educated, more non-traditional middle and upper status caste groupings, as well as among the lower socioeconomic levels of poorer villagers

A few articles are on family in South India Puthenkalam's article focuses on family orgnisation of the matrilineal joint family (*tarawad*) among the Nayars of Kerala which has gradually weakened during the colonial rule A Aiyyapan, based on his study of matrimonial advertisement in Tamil Nadu, and M S A Rao, on the communities of Kerala, show that affinity between the caste and joint family is still quite strong

Despite the efforts and constraints on the part of the editor, the book *The Family in India* looks more like a work on family in western India with more focus on states like Gujarat and Maharashtra and almost negligible on many others, particularly those of the east and the north-east Also, some of the significant conceptual and theoretical contributions like Pauline Kolenda's comparative study and analysis of the trends in the family research or T N Madan's rich ethnographic account of family and kinship among rural Kashmiri Pandits are missing or sparingly mentioned

The book, however, is highly useful as it provides access to students and researchers of the original articles published at different times at one place and also informs them about the trends and developments on the progress of the study on family in India It also points out to the gaps which research on the family could possibly fill, for instance, those dealing with emotional dimension of family, pathology in sexual health and the lived experiences of people in everyday lives It provides a better grasp of the concepts of the

family and household and draws our attention to make use of the immense amount of available empirical census data

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Movie Notice

Collaboration Blues
(22 minutes, English, 2006)

Directed by R Sooryamoorthy, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa (Email sooryamoorthyr@ukzn ac za)

Actors	Gerry Garland, Kerry Philp, Arthur Stinchcombe, Issac Abboy, Tesfagabir Tesfu and students
Narration	Njabulo Sithole
Music	Thorin Roberts

Collaboration in scientific research is as old as research Collaboration occurs between scientists from different continents and cultures through a spectrum of technologies, producing a mix of knowledge In the research process, collaboration is viewed as producing results through the transfer and sharing of information, skills and expertise For a variety of reasons scientists establish links with their counterparts within and outside their own locations for collaborative ventures However, collaboration, for many participating partners, is not a very smooth process

This film shows that scientific collaboration, involving multiple partners, is a strenuous process fraught with difficulties along with the benefits it brings in Revealed through the experiences of a long standing geographer, the movie focuses on professional difficulties and advantages of collaboration

Books Received

Appelrouth, Scott and Laura Desfor Edles 2007 *Sociological theory in the contemporary era Text and readings* Thousand Oaks, California Pine Forge Press (An Imprint of Sage Publications)

Atal, Yogesh 2006 *Changing Indian society* Jaipur Rawat Publications

Bel, Bernard, Jan Brouwer, Biswajit Das, Vibodh Parthasarathi and Guy Poitevin (eds) 2007 *The social and the symbolic* New Delhi Sage Publications

Béteille, André 2007 *Marxism and class analysis* New Delhi Oxford University Press

Boruah, Bijoy H and Ramashanker Misra (eds) 2006 *Social reality and tradition Essays in modes of understanding* Jaipur Rawat Publications

Chowdhry, Prem 2007 *Contentious marriages, eloping couples Gender, caste, and patriarchy in northern India.* New Delhi Oxford University Press

Das, Veena 2007 *Life and words Violence and the descent into the ordinary* New Delhi Oxford University Press

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Nayar, Baldev Raj 2007 *India's globalization Evaluating the economic consequences* New Delhi Vistaar Publications

Shah, A M (ed) 2007 *The grassroots of democracy Field studies in Indian elections* Delhi Permanent Black

Singh, Kultar 2007 *Quantitative social research methods* New Delhi Sage Publications

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1 *Sociological Bulletin* welcomes original articles Articles (not exceeding 6,000-8,000 words) must be typed on one side of the paper, double-spaced, with wide margins on all four sides An abstract (not exceeding 100 words) must accompany the article

2 In the first instance, send only the hard copy of the typescript (two copies) If the article is accepted for publication, the contributor(s) will be required to send the soft copy of the article as an Email attachment processed on MSWord for Windows

3 Within the text, adopt the author-date method of citation minus the comma, for example, (Lobo 2002) If more than one work of an author is cited, separate the years of publication with a comma (Pandey 1996, 1999) Separate the page numbers of citations by a colon (Uberoi 2002 264) and hyphenate the inclusive numbers (Uberoi 2002 264-65) When more than one author is cited, the entries should be chronological with works of different authors separated by a semicolon (Omvedt 1990, Hasan 1994, Mayaram 1997) For co-authored works, cite both names (Jayal and Pai 2001), for works authored by three or more authors, use '*et al* ' after the first name (Patel *et al* 2002) If a citation is repeated within a paragraph without intervening citations, use *ibid*, instead of repeating the author's name again, and provide the relevant page number(s) (*ibid* 32) If gazetteers, reports and works of governmental organisations and other institutions are cited, mention the name of the organisation/institution sponsoring the publication in the citation, fully spelt out at its first occurrence (Government of India 2003), and use its abbreviation/acronym in subsequent citations (GOI 2003)

4 Give separately the bibliographic details of all works cited in the article under **References** in the following sequence (a) Article the name(s) of the author(s), the year of publication, title of the article (within single inverted commas), the name of the journal (italicised), and the volume number, the issue number, and the beginning and ending page numbers (b) Chapter in an edited work or compilation the name(s) of the author(s), the year of publication, title of the chapter (within single inverted commas), the name(s) of the editor(s)/compiler(s), title of the book (italicised), the beginning and ending page numbers of the chapter, place of publication, and the name of the publisher (c) Book the name(s) of the author(s), the year of publication, title of the book (italicised), place of publication, and the name of the publisher The listing in References must follow the alphabetical order of the last name of the (first) author For illustrations, see any recent issue of the *Bulletin*

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7 Cite sentences or words taken from other works with single quotation marks, use double quotation marks only within quotations Separate quotations exceeding fifty words from the text and indent them on the left Unless the entire sentence is part of the quotation, the punctuation must remain outside the quotation marks

8 Use British, rather than American, spellings (labour, not labor, programme, not program) Similarly, use 's' rather than 'z', in 'ise', 'ising', 'isation' words Authors have latitude as regards italicisation, but italicisation needs to be consistent in the article

9 Write numerals between one and ninety-nine in words, and 100 and above in figures However, the following are to be in figures only distance 3 km, age 32 years old, percentage 64 per cent, and years 1990s

10 Contributors are required to provide on a separate sheet their name, designation, official address and Email ID Only articles which have not been published earlier or which are not being considered for publication elsewhere will be entertained A declaration to this effect must be included in the covering letter

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SOCIOLOGICAL BULLETIN
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Volume 56, Number 3 September–December 2007

ARTICLES

The Future of Sociology
– ***Michael Burawoy*** 339

Purity, Impurity, Untouchability Then and Now
– ***A.M. Shah*** 355

A Sociology for Happiness
Beyond Western versus Non-Western Perspectives
– ***Kenji Kosaka*** 369

Is Software Work in India Task Fragmented?
A Study of Software Workers in Bangalore
– ***P Vigneswara Ilavarasan*** 383

Microcredit for Microenterprises or for Immediate Consumption Needs?
– ***R. Sooryamoorthy*** 401

Street Gangs in Guntur
A Study in the Sociology of Deviance and Crime
– ***M Malakondaiah and K. Radhakrishna Murty*** 414

DISCUSSION

The Poser
Universalising and Indigenising Social Knowledge
'Breaking the Western Hegemony
– ***Namrata Gupta*** 426

The Responses
Let Sociology be Sociology
– ***Rajesh Gill*** 430

Challenging Western Paradigm on Social Knowledge
– ***B.B. Mohanty*** 435

Old Issues and New Global Contexts
– ***Maitrayee Chaudhuri*** 438

Plea for an Open, Accommodative Syllabus in Sociology
– ***Daha Chakrabarti*** 441

BOOK REVIEWS

A M Shah (ed) *The grassroots of democracy Field studies in Indian elections*	***Nikhlesh Kumar***	445
Badri Narayan *Women heroes and dalit assertion in North India*	***Vandana***	447
Baldev Raj Nayar *India's globalization Evaluating the economic consequences*	***Balkrishna V Bhosale***	449
Bernard Bel *et al* (eds) *Media and mediation*	***Deepak Kem***	451
Bernard Bel *et al* (eds) *The social and the symbolic*	***Vineetha Menon***	452
Bijoy H Boruah and Ramashanker Misra (eds) *Social reality and tradition*	***Nita Mathur***	455
M N Karna (ed) *Democracy, pluralism and conflict*	***R. Saravana Raja***	457
Rehana Ghadially (ed) *Urban women in contemporary India A reader*	***Sawmya Ray***	459
Sadhna Arya and Anupama Roy (eds) *Poverty, gender and migration*	***Pushpesh Kumar***	462
Sakarama Somayaji and Ganesha Somayaji (eds) *Sociology of globalisation perspectives from India*	***Antony Palackal***	464
Veena Das *Life and words Violence and the descent into the ordinary*	***Rowena Robinson***	466
Wendy Singer *'A constituency suitable for ladies' and other social histories of Indian elections*	***Suhrita Saha***	468
Books Received		470
Secretary's Report (2006)	***Anand Kumar***	471
Index to Volume 56		483

SOCIOLOGICAL BULLETIN
56 (3), September – December 2007, 339-354
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The Future of Sociology

Michael Burawoy

Like a hurricane, third-wave marketisation is picking up velocity and destroying societies in its path, destroying the very grounds upon which sociology grows Sociology and humanity have a common interest in upholding civil society, and keeping state and market at bay Working with Karl Polanyi's The Great Transformation, *I diagnose three waves of marketisation associated with the commodification of labour, money and land, generating counter-movements at local, national and global levels I argue that sociology is reshaped with each wave in the first, it is utopian, in the second, it is driven by policy concerns, whereas emerging with the third wave marketisation is public sociology The possibilities and challenges of public sociology as well as its relation to policy, critical and professional sociology are the subjects of this paper*

[Keywords marketisation, nature, Polanyi, public sociology]

A third wave of marketisation has been sweeping the world, destroying the ramparts laboriously erected to defend society against the first and second waves of the 19th and 20th centuries Swept away are the labour rights first won by western labour movements against the marketisation of the 19th century, but also the social rights guaranteed by states against the marketisation of the 20th century Once again the world is being levelled down, and this time it is the whole world Third-wave marketisation not only abolishes hard won gains of the past, not only finds its way into every nook and cranny, but also extends commodification to new realms Nothing is sacrosanct to the third wave as it surges deeper and deeper into human society

The commodification of nature, in particular, has come home to roost during the last quarter of the 20th century, gathering momentum as we enter the 21st century Even as I speak struggles continue unabated over the dams of the Narmada River, over land dispossession in New Delhi, over the expulsion of farmers to make way for Special Economic Zones in West Bengal I could give parallel examples of devastation for almost any country, and not just in the Global South Behind this third wave are predatory classes, colluding with nation states and sometimes also with multilateral agencies, reigning terror down on the desperate and the destitute, workers and farmers, in cities and rural communities The last hold out against this economic tsunami is society itself, composed of *associations* with a measure of collective self-regulation, *movements* forged out of a fragile collective will, and *publics* of mutual recognition and communication Will society measure up to the challenge?

In facing this worldwide threat to society, and thus to human existence, sociologists have four choices They can side with the state against the market, hoping to exploit what remains of state autonomy In some nations this might make sense, such as those with a continuing legacy of social democratic politics or a strong legacy of welfare provision Such policy science depends on finding spaces within the state from which to contain the market juggernaut – spaces that are disappearing everywhere, but at rates that vary from one nation to the next Sociologists' second choice is to bury their heads in the sand, proclaiming that science must first be built before they can sally forth We must not risk our legitimacy, our very existence by wading out into the storm The professional sociologists sit tight waiting for the storm to pass, hoping against hope that it will not sweep them up with rest of society The third choice is to agitate against the first two choices, writing tracts against their moral bankruptcy, launching jeremiads against those colluding with the evils of state and market But these critical sociologists are preaching to a shrinking band of initiates as the storm strikes Their message is incomprehensible and no one is listening There is, finally, a fourth road that refuses to collaborate with market and state, that says science without politics is blind, that critique without intervention is empty, that calls on sociologists to engage directly with society before it disappears altogether This is what I call public sociology Third-wave marketisation calls forth the age of public sociology

While public sociology can take the lead, it can only move forward with the supporting role of a professional science that gives lie to ruling ideologies and discloses injustice and inequality Public sociology also depends on outward-looking critical knowledges that, in one direction, keep professional science honest, but in the other direction galvanise

movements around threatened values Public sociology is nothing if it cannot, in the final analysis, bring about change even if only indirectly It cannot, therefore, dismiss the world of policy science, but it has to attack it from without That is the agenda but what is the context?

I
Three Faces of Marketisation: South Africa, Russia and the United States

Third-wave marketisation is global, even if sociology's reaction is still, for the most part, local or national Let me illustrate with three countries with which I have some familiarity South Africa, Russia and the United States When I returned to South Africa in 1990, after a 22-year absence, I found there, in the twilight of apartheid, a sociology energised by its engagement with the anti-apartheid struggles, particularly with the labour movement The sociology of 'social movement unionism' was born in the 1980s, subsequently to be taken up and further developed in other global contexts The post-apartheid transition, however, would take place in a period of renewed market triumphalism, impelled by the collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe What socialist ambitions the African National Congress had developed in the course of its struggles quickly evaporated once it assumed power in 1994 Instead South Africa opened its borders to trade and set about privatising its considerable public sector The flood of imports from countries where labour conditions were even more oppressive and where wages were even lower destroyed sectors of the economy, eroded the strength of trade unions, leading to the casualisation of labour and the growth of the informal sector The move to privatise water, electricity, public transportation and telecommunications was a second assault on day-to-day survival in the townships and villages As the inhumanity of racism was arrested, another inhumanity deepened The elimination of apartheid coincided with the (re)commodification of labour, whether through reduced social protection or suspended industrial regulation It was as if apartheid had served its function, cleared the ground of obstacles and was no longer needed for the new brazen assault on the toiling classes

South African sociology, too, unable to escape the pincer movement of state and market, was pushed towards professionalisation and drawn into the competitive game of international benchmarking As wages in the universities fell behind those in the private sector and civil service, so sociologists made up their short fall by increasing reliance on policy research The vibrant legacies of critical and public sociologies were weakened not only by the pressure for a more scientised and commodified

knowledge, but also by the retreat of society itself – its associations, its movements and its publics Third-wave marketisation has shattered not only society but also the disciplinary field that is its expression

Apartheid disintegrated soon after its ideological foe, the Soviet order, collapsed – a collapse that had its own tragic denouement Following the chain reactions of 1989 in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union found itself competing with its erstwhile satellites for the most rapid transition to a market economy Under the rubric of 'shock therapy' (which proved to be all shock and no therapy) and 'big bang' (schemes of wanton destruction inspired by Western economists but firmly embraced by the new elites emerging within the party state) the Soviet order was dismantled in order to release the spontaneous growth of the market The quicker the destruction, so it was argued, the less likely communism would exercise its revenge, and the more rapid would be capitalist reconstruction The market did indeed spring to life but it played havoc with production

With the liberalisation of prices at the beginning of 1992, inflation spiralled out of control, businesses quickly went out of business, and wages were not paid The realm of exchange became the source of unimaginable wealth for a well-positioned few and the last resort for most Resources flowed out of production and into flea markets, kiosks, supermarkets, banking, mafia, currency speculation, asset stripping and privatisation Everything was up for sale in a big grab with rapidly diminishing time horizons The commodification of money, for it too was subject to market exchange, had made it next to useless in economic transactions, which therefore retreated into barter

Instead of revolution or evolution Russia faced economic involution – an economy that consumes itself leading to a decline next to which the wreckage wrought by the October Revolution was child's play If Stalinism brought primitive accumulation, the dispossession of the peasantry and the creation of a working class with nothing but its labour power to sell, the market brought re-peasantisation, what one might call primitive *dis*accumulation Demographers have calculated that rates of mortality through lowered life expectancy in the decade after the fall of communism was as great as in the Stalinist atrocities of the 1930s For so many, economic survival meant falling back into subsistence production and with that an advanced society retreated into kin networks and even more narrowly into the nuclear family

As society goes, so goes sociology Except for a momentary effervescence in the twilight of communism, under perestroika, when civil society burst forth, sociology had been an ideological conveyor belt for the party state In the aftermath of communism its inherited professional

base was, therefore, very weak Marketisation turned sociology into opinion polling and market research, while academic sociology disappeared into the new business schools Without a solid foundation in professional sociology, a crude policy science prevailed Critical and public sociologies could scarcely be found

Paradoxically, we find almost the opposite in the United States Third-wave marketisation has struck here too, aiming to destroy and uproot society, stimulating a lively response from professional sociology, but this remains bottled up in the academy, unable to make effective engagement with the wider world With society sinking into oblivion – a process insulated from complex and sturdy research and teaching establishments – the potential contribution of a public sociology only grows Yet its reception and adoption in society face ever-greater obstacles

Take the example of Hurricane Katrina that brought down levees and flooded the city of New Orleans in August 2005, killing over 1,300 civilians Much attention has been rightly awarded to the abysmal failure of the federal administration to cope with this unnatural disaster It was not as if the catastrophe was unanticipated – knowing how precarious were the levees holding back the flood waters scientists had predicted their collapse in the face of such a hurricane and also accurately forecasted what would befall this beleaguered city The levees had not been rebuilt, despite appeals to Congress from local administration, because the state had other budgetary priorities, not least, in recent years, the war in Iraq

Indeed, militarism also explains the failure of emergency relief For one, Louisiana's home guard that was mobilised to handle the crisis was depleted by postings to Iraq More important, the Department of Homeland Security, newly created after 9/11, swallowed up FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), as military security trumped economic and social security Third-wave marketisation has gone hand in hand with gutting what there was of a welfare state and with deepening inequalities, so that the poor, largely black population of New Orleans was defenceless against the flooding, losing their homes and their possessions They are now scattered across the nation in their trailers, and many finding life even more difficult are trying to make their way back By its abstention, the US state commandeered a major racial expulsion from urban land, reconstituted New Orleans as a middle-class city by relying on the importation of cheap migrant labour to service its economy But states do not have to be so ineffective in the face of disasters Across the Gulf of Mexico, Cuba considers it a national

tragedy if a single person dies at the hands of a hurricane, even one as strong as Katrina

Third-wave marketisation provides the context for the social paralysis of the state in its response to the hurricane, but marketisation was also a more direct cause of the devastation The rapid and unregulated growth of New Orleans's leisure industry recovered land at the expense of the wetlands that are crucial for taming a storm surge and absorbing floodwaters Unregulated capitalism also drove the oil drilling in the Gulf just off the New Orleans shoreline, causing further subsidence of the land, making the city that much more vulnerable to flooding Finally, scientists have shown that global warming, another product of third-wave marketisation, by heating the sea intensifies the ferocity of hurricanes Thus, with a profligate and unconstrained capitalism we can expect disaster damage to only increase The US state was deaf to all the warnings of scientists whether it be those predicting the stronger hurricanes, the weakness of the levees, or the unequal social impact of such a disaster

Perhaps economists with their interests in expanding the market or political scientists with their complementary interest in guaranteeing the political conditions for commodification may have the ear of capitalists and the state, but sociologists with their roots in society can have no such illusions Indeed, with one hand states herald volunteer organisations or NGOs, as national saviours, yet with the other hand those very same states have declared war on civil society, attacking one trench after another Sociologists, therefore, have to turn away from the hostile policy worlds of state and economy and instead cultivate other audiences, defending what is left of movements, organisations and publics, seeking to bolster the power of society organised for its own self-defence, and as a countervailing force to third-wave marketisation It's a tall order, full of pitfalls So how should we think of it?

II
Three Waves of Commodification: Labour, Money, and Land

My three cases – United States, Russia and South Africa and I could easily have extended it to India, Brazil and China – show how third-wave marketisation intensifies and is intensified by the dissolution of organised capitalism, state socialism, and colonialism Today, state regulation continues but it deepens rather than counters the commodification of labour, money and land, or what Karl Polanyi in *The Great Transformation* (1944) called fictitious commodities Polanyi argued that

commodifying these entities, that is, subjecting them to unimpeded market exchange, destroyed their use value, and thus undermined their utility as factors of production You might say that the mode of exchange rebels against the mode of production

Much of *The Great Transformation* is devoted to the commodification of labour in 19th century England With the revoking of labour protection under Speenhamland and the proscription of outdoor relief, labour was buffeted by the seismic shifts in market forces Capital could hire and fire labour at will with no concern for its survival, destroying the traditional community within which it had been embedded Yet, at the same time, desperation forged a new society out of *social movements*, such as the factory movement to restrict the length of the working day, and out of *associations*, such as burial societies, trade unions, co-operatives, and utopian experiments (for example, Robert Owen's *New Lanark*) In brief, the commodification of labour led to the spontaneous defensive self-reconstitution of society at least in Europe In the colonial world, referring mainly to Africa, Polanyi told a story of relentless demolition of all social defences against market forces His portrait overlooks emerging forms of African resistance as well as the limits on destruction set by the colonial state

Polanyi carries his analysis into the European 20th century, shifting from the focus on labour to the focus on money When money becomes the subject of unregulated market exchange, as in Russia immediately after the collapse of communism, uncertainty of its value becomes so great that enterprises cannot function Already in the 19th century states created their own national banks to regulate currencies and exchange rates, but the adoption of the gold standard after World War I led to wild fluctuations in the value of currencies threatening the viability of businesses States responded with protectionism, insulating their national economies from global markets in more or less draconian ways Fascism, Stalinism (collectivisation and planning), Social Democracy and the New Deal were divergent ways of coping with second-wave marketisation but they all involved restoring certain labour rights and extending them to social rights, including minimum wages, pensions, education and welfare To be sure, these social rights could come with narrower political rights and the regulation of society Even colonialism might be included within such a protectionist reaction to the market, in particular, strategies of indirect rule that sustained rather than destroyed traditional communities, thereby re-producing colonial working-class connections to subsistence economies, the foundation of cheap labour Second-wave marketisation and the counter-movement by states coincided with Eric

Hobsbawm's short 20th century that begins with World War I and ends with the fall of communism

Polanyi never anticipated a third wave of marketisation Perhaps this was because he did not distinguish between a first wave and a second wave within his single 'great transformation' More likely it was because the Fascist and Stalinist reactions to the second wave were so devastating with respect to human freedom, laying the basis of World War II Polanyi thought human kind would never again take the road of market fundamentalism Instead, he projected the possibility of a far more optimistic future in which markets and states would be subject to the direction and regulation of self-organising society He was wrong on both counts first, there would be a third wave of marketisation and we are in the middle of it now and second, no self-regulating society would emerge strong enough to keep market and state at bay How should we characterise third-wave marketisation that begins in the mid-1970s and what societal reactions can we observe? I propose three dimensions

Following Polanyi, we see that first-wave marketisation generates a counter-movement against the commodification of labour, while second-wave marketisation generates a counter-movement against the commodification of money Third-wave marketisation, I claim, generates a counter-movement against the commodification of land or, more generally, against the commodification of nature Although land was already commodified in the first and second waves of marketisation they had yet to lead to the wholesale devastation that now besets this planet. The effects of the commodification of nature have crept up on us, but they have been cumulative Thus, so many of the struggles to-day are around the protection of access to land whether it be squatters or shack dwellers defending themselves against local governments trying to clean them out of the urban landscape, whether it be middle-class residents of the city opposing high-rise developers, whether it be indigenous peoples refusing to give up their land, or farmers battling against dams that would destroy their existence, whether it be the struggles for clean air, against the dumping of toxic waste, against privatisation of water and electricity And so the list goes on The commodification of labour and money, of course, is still important, indeed is as important as ever as I indicated above in my accounts of South Africa, Russia and the United States, but the reaction to the commodification of nature is the distinctive feature of third-wave marketisation

The second way to characterise the third-wave marketisation is its scale It is truly global in its causes and its ramifications Once the barricades of state socialism, colonialism, and to a lesser extent social democracy crumbled, there was no place to hide from the storm of

marketisation There is progression in the scale of reaction If the response to the commodification of labour under first-wave marketisation was often local but aspiring to be national, and if the response to the commodification of money under second-wave marketisation was national but aspiring to be global (IMF, World Bank), then the response to the commodification of nature under third-wave marketisation may set out from the local, but it aspires to be global Since the effects of global warming, nuclear accidents, water privatisation, contagious diseases are global so the response, in the final analysis, has also to be global, even if this global response involves knitting together local movements

The third way to characterise successive waves of marketisation is not the advance from one fictitious commodity to the next, but in terms of the successive roll back of defences erected against marketisation If second-wave marketisation first destroys the ramparts of labour organisation before it generates a counter-movement to build new ramparts of state social protection, then third-wave marketisation rolls back both labour and social rights We see this everywhere as trade unions decline, as real wages of working classes fall, as social security, pensions, welfare all contract and not just in one country but across the world – although to be sure very unevenly On what foundation then will the next round of defences be built – defences that will fend off the degradation of nature but also recover labour rights and social rights? The deeper the challenge to humanity and community, the deeper has to be the reaction In response to third-wave marketisation we will need to develop the defence of human rights – the defence of a community of mutual recognition as human beings – that will necessarily incorporate labour and social rights

Human rights, like all rights discourses, are easily appropriated and narrowed to suit particular interests The United States defends its imperial adventures and colonial-like occupations – whether externally in Iraq or internally against African Americans – as the furtherance of human rights Electoral democracy becomes a human right that justifies invasion, killing and subjugation abroad while hiding it in the prison complex at home Markets themselves are advanced in the name of the human right to freedom of choice and the protection of private property, foreclosing what this means to those who cannot choose, who do not have property Human rights that are universal rather than particular, and that, therefore, include labour rights and social rights must aim for the protection of human community, that involves first recognising and treating each other as ends rather than means Human rights then is a complex terrain of struggle in which groups stake their claim on the basis of their own interests, but ultimately human rights is about the protection

of humanity, galvanising radical struggles of global proportions against third-wave marketisation

III
Three Waves of Sociology: Utopian, Policy, and Public

The thesis of this paper is that to each wave of marketisation there corresponds a distinctive sociology Sociology grew up in the 19th century together with civil society, itself a response to first-wave marketisation Sociology began as a moral enterprise defending society against the market, especially the destruction of community as newly proletarianised, destitute and degraded populations made the city their home Sociology indulged in all sorts of schemes to circumvent or leap beyond the market, drawn from such schemes as Robert Owen's in England, the Narodniki in Russia, the co-operative and commune movement in the United States This was the era of utopian sociology One might say that Marx and Engels were utopians in their postulation of communism that would arise out of the ashes of the inevitably self-destroying capitalism Auguste Comte imagined a familial order led by sociologists while Emile Durkheim postulated an organic solidarity built on corporatist organisation of the division of labour, a form of guild socialism In a similar vein, the Gandhian movement was a specifically anti-colonial response to invading markets, seeking the boycott of foreign imports and the promotion of *khadi*

Of course, Marx, Comte and Durkheim would rail against being labelled utopian After all they saw themselves as scientists, committed to what is and what would necessarily be by virtue of the laws of society Still, from today's standpoint, for all the revolutionary breakthroughs they brought to the study of society, their science remained speculative, especially as regards the future, strongly imbued with moral concerns to reverse the degradation brought about by 19th century capitalism They focused on the division of labour as the foundation of their science and the central role of labour in their utopian projections

Second-wave marketisation that takes off after World War I challenges the rights that had been won by labour through trade unions and political parties But, as Polanyi argued, it was the ravages of international trade and exchange that threatened the conditions of capital accumulation and prompted protectionist reactions from the state The reactions ranged from fascism to the New Deal and from Stalinism to social democracy but they all instituted a measure of social (but not necessarily political) rights, including security in unemployment,

pensions, welfare, and education Sociology developed accordingly In those countries that reacted to second-wave marketisation with authoritarian means, whether Fascist Germany or Stalinist Soviet Union, there sociology was eclipsed, but where it reacted with some form of social democracy, whether in the United States or Sweden, you got the development of a new type of sociology, that collaborated with the state to defend society against the market This was the era of policy sociology – state funded research into social problems Indeed, in England an autonomous sociology barely existed, but instead the field of social administration had grown up, integrally connected to the welfare state

In the United States we see the development of a professional sociology that had greater autonomy from the state Still, this sociology was concerned with the stability of society – stratification theory based on a prestige hierarchy of occupations, functionalist theories of the family, the regulation of deviance, industrial sociology concerned with the pacification and extraction of labour, political sociology focusing on the social bases of electoral democracy and the containment of extremism The overarching theoretical framework was defined by structural functionalism – the delineation of functional prerequisites to keep any social system in equilibrium and how those prerequisites are met by the institutions of society During this period sociology developed its own positive science, namely, detailed attention to empirical research, new methods of data collection and data analysis and the elaboration of so-called middle range theories that nestled in the scaffolding of structural functionalism Positive science was a reaction against the earlier speculative science that was propelled by moral reform Positive science wanted to expel moral questions to a completely different sphere, antithetical to science If the first wave of sociology invented utopias, the second policy wave tended to think that utopia had already arrived and mistook it for reality It was riveted to the present, concerned only with ironing out its small irrationalities

So what sort of sociology marks the response to third-wave marketisation? As we have seen this latest round of marketisation rolls back the statist defence of society, taking the offensive against labour rights and social rights Unlike the second wave of marketisation that provoked an anti-market reaction from the state – protectionism, planning, wage guarantees, welfare, public ownership of the means of production – third-wave marketisation entails the collusion of the state Still a regulatory state, it is nonetheless regulation for rather than against the market It undoes all that was achieved against second-wave marketisation Society is, thus, under a double assault from economy and state Unable to gain much leverage in the state or with the market the fate

Table 1 Sociology versus the Market

	First-Wave Marketisation	*Second-Wave Marketisation*	*Third-Wave Marketisation*
Fictitious Commodity	Labour	Money	Nature
Locus of Response	Local Community	Nation State	Global Civil Society
Rights	Labour	Social	Human
Orientation of Sociology	Utopian	Policy	Public
Science	Speculative	Positivist	Reflexive
Geographical Locus/Origin	Western Europe	United States	'Semi-Periphery'
World Context	Colonialism	Imperialism	Globalisation

of sociology rests with society Sociology's self-interest lies in the constitution of civil society where it barely exists and in its protection where it is in retreat Hence the claim we are living in the age of public sociology

We are, in a sense, returning to first-wave marketisation of the 19th century but with a difference First, sociology cannot limit its engagement to local publics, but, as I have argued, it has to be concerned with knitting together a global civil society Second, there is a utopian dimension but linked not to imaginary utopias but to actual existing utopias, whose conditions of existence and expanded reproduction it is our task to explore with all the techniques at our disposal Third, this calls for a science very different from the speculative science of the 19th century It calls for a science that is no longer rooted in value consensus and stability, but one that seeks to develop alternative values, hence the importance of value discussion, what I have called critical sociology We no longer strive for a single paradigmatic science but a discipline made up of multiple intersecting research programmes, founded on the values of different publics but, at the same time, working out theoretical frameworks through engaging their external anomalies and internal contradictions I call this a reflexive science, a science that is frightened neither of reflecting on its value foundations nor of articulating them publicly, but a science nonetheless

If first wave sociology emanated from Europe, and second-wave sociology reached its apotheosis in the United States, where will third-wave sociology find its energy? In thinking of vibrant public sociologies, I turn to such countries as South Africa, especially in the climax to its anti-apartheid struggles, Brazil under its post-authoritarian regimes, or India with its continuing post-colonial struggles for social justice What do these countries have in common? They represent the clash of North

and South, the tsunami of third-wave marketisation meets the ramparts of civil society erected in the struggles against different forms of authoritarianism, themselves created under second-wave marketisation We might call these arenas the 'semi-periphery', but contra Wallerstein they no longer perform a stabilising function (as they perhaps did under the world system of second-wave marketisation), but they are now the site of veritable volcanoes, the source of unpredictable explosions against the invading new order Public sociology finds itself swept up in the social lava, seeking to channel it against the market

We cannot divorce the ties between successive waves of sociology and waves of marketisation from their very different world historical contexts Crudely put, we can connect first-wave marketisation and utopian sociology with the colonial project, which as R W Connell (1997) has shown, formed the foundation of early European and American social theory Evolutionism and the ideologies of progress and modernisation that inspired utopian sociology grew up on the sands of abiding and imaginary stereotypes of the colonised Other Similarly second-wave marketisation was connected to policy sociology through an imperial project which assured the domination of the West through more autonomous colonial and post-colonial regimes As Partha Chatterjee (1986) has so eloquently shown, the anti-colonial project that informed post-colonial regimes was intimately connected to Western ideas of nationalism – ideology that continued to reproduce a very unequal world With the constitution of the national project, whether this was Stalinism, Fascism, Social Democracy, the New Deal, forms of indirect rule and dependency and even the Nehruvian state, came a policy sociology geared to social problems or, as in the case of India, a colonial and post-colonial anthropology

The unity of second-wave sociology comes into focus when seen from the standpoint of third-wave marketisation whose project is indeed to destroy the barriers to open exchange set up by the nation state and to constitute an economically unified global order Third-wave marketisation is not so much destroying the nation state as harnessing it to the homogenising forces of globalisation, a homogenisation that establishes new world hierarchies Globalisation defines a hegemonic terrain in which any challenge has to be global too Opposition has to puncture the universalistic pretence of globalisation by revealing its particularistic character, and proposing an alternative globalisation from below – a global civil society that circumvents and transcends the nation state, spreading multiple social currents across boundaries Here lies the challenge for public sociology

But public sociology will not spring *tabula rasa* from the global arena Just as the nation state (together with neo-liberal economics) is harnessed to globalisation from above, so the first and most natural context for the development of public sociology is also national, driven by the need to construct an autonomous civil society where it is absent or weak and to defend and expand it where it is more vibrant But there are other conditions for a national public sociology It has longevity when it has a well-developed scientific foundation in professional sociology It also requires a sense of its own values that comes from a critical sociology As sociology becomes more global, borrowings across national lines become more feasible and more important Portugal, for example, after its 1974 revolution, overthrowing nearly 50 years of dictatorship, drew on critical and professional traditions within American and French sociologies, harnessing them to a vibrant civil society This small country is one of the leaders in public sociology, fused with policy, critical and professional sociologies

Global borrowings present dangers as well as possibilities – the hegemony of United States' professional sociology can constrain the responsiveness of national sociologies to local concerns Writing in English for foreign professional audiences inevitably threatens the vitality of local public sociology Borrowings have to be selective Whereas inspirational public sociologies may appear first in so-called semi-peripheral contexts, and their effects, too, can ramify across the world, such a counter-hegemonic movement will rely on inputs from other countries On the one side, we have a hegemonic globalisation of sociology which tries to harness a policy sociology to a dominant professional sociology, whereas on the other side there grows a counter-hegemonic globalisation that will subordinate professional and policy sociology to the needs of public sociology, especially an organic public sociology A Southern feeding of public sociology into the United States, for example, could temper the provincialism of US professional sociology so that it could play a constructive role in the world arena

IV
Conclusion

I have tried to show why sociology has to take a public turn Sociology lives and dies with society When society is threatened so is sociology We can no longer rely on the state to contain the market and so sociologists have to forge their own connections to society, that is to develop public sociologies We have to do more than passively serve society, but have to conserve and constitute society In this sociology has

many potential allies and partners within society as they too come under increasing assault from state and market That is the broader contemporaneous context within which public sociology could be a guiding spirit and directing force

We cannot think of the contemporary context outside its past. The three waves of marketisation and their corresponding configurations of sociology cannot be compartmentalised as three separate periods Each wave deposits its legacy into the next wave in a dialectical regression or progression So the waves of commodification deepen as they move regressively from labour to money to nature, each wave incorporating the commodification of the previous period, just as the counter-movement leads progressively from labour rights to social rights (which includes labour rights) to human rights which includes all three

The dialectical movement of sociology is rather different Policy sociology with its value neutral positive science is a reaction against utopian sociology with its moral infusions and its speculative science, while public sociology tries to bind the value commitment of the first period to the scientific advances of the second Whereas commodification and its counter-movements deepen with every wave, sociology advances through thesis, antithesis, and synthesis But even here we should be careful not to think in terms of discrete sociologies, but rather reconfigurations of the four elements of sociology, in which the weight of professional, policy, critical and public sociologies shifts over time Indeed, a public sociology cannot really take off in a sustained manner unless it is impelled by critical sociology and grounded in a professional sociology

The rhythm and spacing of the waves also varies from country to country. In the advanced capitalist world of today, the waves are more clearly separated in time, whereas it might be said in countries such as Russia, India or China that there is a compression of waves Certainly in Russia the commodification of labour, money and nature was simultaneous and intense upon the fall of the Soviet Union, so much so that counter-reaction was suffocated before it began Sociology suffered in parallel In China, on the other hand, the intensification of the commodification of labour, money and nature also coincided in the post-Mao period, yet it was still regulated by the party state, which made for economic development rather than Russian economic involution, imprinting itself on the different legacies of sociology National variation notwithstanding, we can still identify the present era as one in which the commodification of nature concentrates within itself the cumulative impact of commodification more generally In its subsumption of all commodification, the commodification of nature becomes the planet's

most pressing problem and also becomes generative of social movements, held together by the language of human rights

Can sociology meet the challenges of third-wave marketisation, can sociology partake in the knitting together of organisations, movements and publics across the globe? Or will it, too, submit to commodification – the commodification of the *production* of knowledge in the university and elsewhere, but also the commodification of the *dissemination* of knowledge by the mass media? On both counts it will be important for sociology to work directly with organisations, movements and publics to compose a singular process outside the control of market and state

Note

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Purity, Impurity, Untouchability: Then and Now

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This article discusses the relation between purity/impurity and untouchability and the decline in both in the modern times It entails a discussion of division and hierarchy among the Untouchable castes and of the line separating them from the rest of the society

[Keywords concept 'untouchable', hierarchy among Untouchables, line separating Untouchables, purity and pollution, social change, untouchability]

Although the phenomenon of purity and impurity, including the related one of untouchability, was studied in Indian sociology and social anthropology since the beginning of the discipline around 1920, its modern systematic analysis may be said to have begun with M N Srinivas's work on religion among the Coorgs of south India (1952, see also Dumont and Pocock 1959) Since then, a large body of work has grown, and we have now a fair understanding of the phenomenon In this article, I propose to discuss some aspects of it, focussing on changes taking place in the modern times I am aware of the enormous complexity of the phenomenon and its regional diversities, and of the necessity to be extremely careful in making general statements about it The issue of untouchability in particular is highly emotive and politically explosive However, the phenomenon poses important problems for both social theory and policy, and social scientists would be failing in their duty if they do not deal with them in a cool and calm manner

Ideas of purity/impurity were present all over Hindu society for centuries in domestic as well as public life, in exchange of food and water, in practising occupations, in kinship and marriage, in religious action and belief, in temples and monasteries, and in a myriad different contexts and situations These ideas played a crucial role in separating

one caste from another, and in arranging them in a hierarchy, that is to say, in ordering the basic structure of the society We have by now considerable literature presenting elaborate analyses of the ritual hierarchy of castes based on ideas of purity/impurity A Hindu man or woman's life was permeated with ideas of purity/impurity from the moment of birth to the moment of death, and every day from the moment s/he got up from bed till s/he went to bed Even if one manages to read the entire literature on purity/impurity, I doubt if one would be able to grasp all its ramifications A complete list of pure/impure actions, ideas and materials would occupy a whole book, perhaps as large as an encyclopaedia The Hindu civilisation is sometimes called a civilisation of purity and pollution, and the Hindu psyche is believed to be pathologically obsessed with them One has only to conjure up an image of the orthodox Hindu taking different kinds of purificatory baths and their frequency I may give just one illustration The main character in a Gujarati novel written towards the end of the 19th century (Nilkanth 1900), a Brahman named Bhadrambhadra was travelling on a train for the first time from Ahmedabad to Bombay He considered his co-passengers polluting, and therefore took a purificatory bath on the platform of every station the train halted at

Gods and goddesses and their abodes, the temples, were attributed the highest degree of purity, and therefore protected from every conceivable source of impurity In the same manner, temple priests were considered the purest men who had to observe the rules of purity/impurity meticulously Although the Brahmans were considered the purest caste, a Brahman priest was purer than an ordinary Brahman The Brahman sub-castes were also ranked, and the Brahmans performing mortuary rituals were considered the lowest Similarly, many non-Brahman members of certain highly Sanskritic sects observed the rules of purity/impurity so meticulously, particularly while worshipping their deities, that they considered the ordinary Brahmans less pure, if not polluting Many holy men among lower castes and tribes, such as *bhagat*s and *bhuva*s, also observed the rules of purity/impurity strictly

Every caste, as a collectivity, was ranked relatively pure or impure vis-à-vis another caste on the basis of mainly its observance of rules of purity/impurity The concern for purity/impurity decreased as one went down the ladder of hierarchy However, there was a continuous process of every caste trying to improve its status by adopting higher levels of purity, as part of the process Srinivas (1956) called sanskritisation As he pointed out and as I have discussed in two recent papers (A M Shah 2005, 2006a), the Brahmans were not the only source of Sanskritic influence Some other higher castes as well as certain non-caste

institutions, such as sects, temples, monasteries, religious literature and religious discourses, could also be its source

The fact that certain castes were considered impure, polluting and untouchable. and occupied the lowest rungs of the hierarchy, has been a major problem of study in social sciences as well as a major concern for social reformers and statesmen in modern India It is a multi-dimensional problem, and I will discuss mainly the dimension of untouchability *qua* untouchability I submit, we would be ignoring social reality if we do not consider untouchability an integral part of the entire complex of purity/impurity in Hindu society and culture Just as men and women belonging to certain castes were considered untouchable, men and women belonging to non-Untouchable castes were also considered untouchable in certain contexts, mainly in the domestic domain In its general sense, untouchability prevailed in every Hindu home For example, in orthodox Hindu homes, the woman or man cooking food in the kitchen was pure compared to other members, such that s/he did not allow them to enter the kitchen, served food outside it, and took care not to touch them and their plates while serving them food A woman during her menstrual period was considered polluting, and therefore segregated in her home Even her sight and shadow were considered polluting and inauspicious on certain occasions Similarly, a woman after childbirth was considered polluting and was isolated in the home for as long as a month or so Maximum impurity was attached to a dead body, and therefore every one connected with it, even a relative residing far away from it, was considered highly impure and polluting, and was isolated The rules about *sutaka*, pollution arising from death, were so many and so complicated that only a few persons in a village or an urban neighbourhood knew them thoroughly

The word *asprishya*, the Sanskrit equivalent of 'untouchable', was used even for contexts of highest purity In Pushti Marg, a Vaishnava sect founded by Vallabhacharya in the 16th century, a member had to worship his/her deity in a state of intense purity This state, in the temple or the home, was called *asprishya* (*aparash* in Gujarati and Hindi) and all other persons were prohibited from touching the worshipper This shows the concept of untouchability could be applied to the most impure as well as the most pure Its use to mark out entire castes as untouchable was a special application of the concept

II

While the *Dharmashastras* and other ancient Hindu texts described the society as divided into four *varnas*, they also mentioned a category of

people outside the *varna* order, usually called *avarna* (without *varna*) as contrasted with *savarna* (with *varna*) They were on the margin of the social order, and are generally considered to be the precursors of the category of people called Untouchables in the modern times A clear understanding of untouchability, however, requires us to recognise the fact that the Untouchables were never a homogeneous group, they were divided into a number of endogamous castes (*jatis*) which were arranged in a hierarchy, in the same way as castes in the rest of the society were divided and arranged The ancient texts, however, do not mention the numerous *jatis* of the Untouchables we now have – more than a thousand of them We begin to get references to some of them in the literature of the regional languages which began to develop in the medieval period However, this literature would not help us compile a comprehensive list of Untouchable *jatis* in any region Such lists began to be compiled only when the British administrators launched the Census of India, the Gazetteers, and the castes-and-tribes volumes in the second half of the 19th century These lists became more or less a bench mark However, we have to inquire How were these lists prepared? On what basis were the various *jatis* considered untouchable? And, how far were these lists objective and reliable?

Simon Charsley, in a well-documented essay (1996) on the career of the concept 'Untouchable', shows how Herbert Risley, the Census Commissioner of India for 1901, was the first to propose, as part of his scheme to classify castes of the Shudra *varna* into five categories, a category called '*Aspṛishya Shudra*' (Untouchable Shudra) He gave instructions to the census officials in different parts of India as to how to place various castes in this category Charsley narrates the complicated problems these officials, and ultimately Risley, faced in their task Nothing like a coherent and consistent list of Untouchable castes for any region, leave alone for India as a whole, emerged Charsley remarks, 'From this unpropitious start, representing as it did more of a rebuff than a successful initiative, the career of a key term was launched' (*ibid* 3) In the social and political movements to uplift the Untouchables, which began more or less simultaneously with Risley's census, the social reformers, statesmen, bureaucrats and others also got involved in identifying specific Untouchable castes for their purpose

Charsley goes on to narrate the career of the terms related to Untouchable, such as Depressed Class, Excluded Caste, Scheduled Caste (henceforth SC), Harijan, and dalit [1] It is clear that, in preparing a list or schedule for every one of these categories, the census officials, other bureaucrats, social reformers and politicians always agreed about including the lowest caste, namely, the Scavengers, but disagreed about

others The main reason was the differences of opinion about what constituted 'untouchability', the defining criterion for each category Charsley remarks, 'As a concept, "Untouchability" suppressed diversity and variation" (*ibid* 12) He does not tell how compromises were made and the differences accommodated to finalise any list – this should be a problem of research The basic point, however, remains that all lists of Untouchable castes, past and present, do not have the objective reality or finality claimed for them Secondly, an idea that the Untouchable castes were separated from the rest of the castes by a fixed and inviolable line got established in all discourse, including the anthropological and sociological one, on Indian society and culture We shall soon examine this line

Whatever the line dividing the Untouchable castes from the rest of the castes, separation of one Untouchable caste from another and their arrangement in a hierarchy were based on essentially the same ideas of purity/impurity that guided the separation and hierarchy of the rest of the castes We have some intensive studies elaborating this point (see Moffatt 1979)

Often the Untouchable castes in a region included a few castes similar to certain castes in the rest of the society For example, as in most other regions, a caste of priests occupying a status similar to that of the Brahmans existed among the Untouchables in Gujarat Called Garo (or Garoda, derived from Sanskrit *guru*), they claimed to be Brahman, put on the sacred thread, and adopted Brahmanical surnames such as Joshi, Trivedi, Vyas and so on (see Stevenson 1930, A M Shah 1987, Randeria 1989) This caste formed part of a hierarchy of several priestly groups related to the hierarchy of castes in the region (a) The highest were of course the Brahmans However, only a minority of them worked as priests, while the majority practised other occupations such as agriculture, teaching, clerical work, government service, money lending, etc The rites of passage and some other rituals among the Brahmans themselves were performed by certain superior priests forming a grade within the caste (b) The members of high Brahman sub-castes worked as priests for high non-Brahman castes (c) The members of a few low Brahman sub-castes worked as priests for lower-middle non-Brahman castes (d) The Barber sub-castes provided the priestly service to the lower, though not Untouchable, castes (e) The Garos provided the priestly service to the other Untouchable castes, except the Scavengers (f) A few Garos forming a grade within their caste provided the priestly service to other Garos Thus, existence of a Brahman-like priestly caste among the Untouchables was not mere 'replication' of existence of Brahmans among the upper castes, as Moffatt (1979) would have called

it In fact, it was one more example of a common characteristic of the caste order, namely, that when a caste providing its service to a higher caste denied the same service to a lower one, some other caste provided it to the latter, or a few members within the latter learnt to perform the service [2] If the number of such members within a caste increased, a new caste or sub-caste might develop in course of time

While the Untouchable Brahmans occupied the highest ritual status among the Untouchables, the scavengers were considered most impure and polluting, occupied the lowest status, and were, therefore, segregated by other Untouchable castes There were many other castes between the two ends, all arranged in a hierarchy according to the norms of purity and pollution As is often said, there was untouchability amongst the Untouchables In this situation, it is highly problematic to apply the statements of ancient texts about the *avarnas* uniformly to the entire range of a thousand or more Untouchable castes of today

Let us return to the assumption that the line dividing the Untouchable from the non-Untouchable was fixed and inviolable If we follow the category prescribed by the state, such as Scheduled Caste, it was fixed [3] But, was it so in social reality? We have to consider three kinds of inter-caste relations in this regard in a local area, comprised of, say, a town and the villages around it,[4] and populated by members of some twenty to twenty-five castes, including a few Untouchable ones (i) relation between the castes just above and just below this line, that is, between the highest of the so-called Untouchable castes and the lowest of the so-called non-Untouchable ones, (ii) relation between a few middle non-Untouchable castes and a few middle Untouchable ones, and (iii) whether the Brahmans and a few other high castes considered the low non-Untouchable castes as untouchable or not Our main problem is that usually we observe the two ends of the hierarchy, the Brahman and the Scavenger, and their relationship Consequently, the general view of the Untouchables tends to be either the Brahman's view of the Scavenger from the top, or the Scavenger's view of the Brahman from the bottom, and therefore partial either way This view needs to be corrected

If the above-mentioned three kinds of inter-caste relations are viewed together, we would not find a fixed and inviolable line dividing the Untouchable castes from the non-Untouchable ones The status of many castes was ambiguous For example, in a village in Gujarat where I did fieldwork in 1955-58, a few households each of two low castes, namely, Senwa and Vaghri, the former an SC and the latter a non-SC, lived side by side on the edge of the village The Vaghris did not treat the Senwas as untouchable, while the upper castes treated both as untouchable Similar ambiguity prevailed regarding castes of specialised urban

craftsmen making articles of leather, such as footwear, bags, straps, belts, seats, drums, saddles, shields, and so on While the highest castes considered them untouchable, the middle ones did not mind touching them [5] For example, in a small town near my field village in Gujarat, the Mochis (Shoemakers) had their homes as well as shops on the edge of the town When a high caste man went to a Shoemaker's shop to get shoes made, he did not allow the Shoemaker to measure his feet Instead, he stood at the entrance of the shop, put his foot on a piece of paper, drew a line with a pencil or pen around it, and gave the paper to the Shoemaker without touching him Moreover, in these high castes, a few persons deeply conscious of purity did not wear leather shoes at all, they wore sandals made of wood or thick jute cloth The middle and lower castes, however, did not mind touching the Shoemaker [6] Intensive research is required on the so-called line of separation between the Untouchable and the non-Untouchable in different parts of India so that we get a more realistic view of the entire caste order

III

What kind of purity/impurity was practised among the Untouchables in their homes and in their personal life? That there was untouchability in every Hindu home was stated earlier Can the same be said about the Untouchable's home? Unfortunately, there is very little ethnographic literature on this issue I have only bits and pieces of information All of them indicate that, although the Untouchables were impure vis-à-vis other castes, and some of them performed such highly impure work as that of skinning dead animals and removing garbage in baskets kept on their head, they were all concerned about purity/impurity in their own life It seems every Untouchable caste had its norms in this regard, a higher one having more sanskritised norms than a lower one As mentioned earlier, the process of sanskritisation operated as much among the Untouchable castes as among the rest of the castes, and that there was a continuous striving among them to achieve higher levels of purity The fundamental point is that, despite the line separating the Untouchables from the rest of Hindu society, all Hindus shared the culture of purity/impurity, and untouchability was an integral part of this culture

As mentioned earlier, there were castes of priests among the Untouchables Where there was no such caste, a few families of some higher Untouchable caste performed priestly functions At least some of these priests had acquired a high level of literacy and could read Hindu scriptures, mostly in a regional language but sometimes also in Sanskrit Similarly, a few individuals in every Untouchable caste had become

members of certain Sanskritic sects, which placed them in a relationship of some equality with higher caste members of the same sect (see A M Shah 2006b) In this context, the recent book on 'untouchable saints' edited by Eleanor Zelliot and Rohini Mokashi-Punekar (2005) is revealing It shows that, since about the 10th century, there were Untouchable saints who composed exquisite poetry in worship of gods and goddesses Tiruppan and Nandnar in Tamil Nadu, Chokhamela in Maharashtra, and Ravidas in north India Their poetry showed a high level of religiosity as well as literary quality, and high castes accepted it and made it an integral part of their temple and domestic worship Tiruppan was given the high status of an Alvar, and Nandnar, that of a Nayanar Similarly, Chandrawadia (2007) narrates, rather briefly, life of seventeen 'Harijan saint poets' (fifteen men and two women) during 15th to 18th century in Saurashtra and Kutch sub-regions of Gujarat (see A M Shah 2007a) Their poems reveal their knowledge of philosophical and theological ideas of Hinduism, and their affiliation with Hindu sects Efforts must be made to inquire about such saints in the rest of Gujarat and in other regions of India They belie the assumption of chasm between the Untouchables and the rest of the society in the past

IV

Radical changes have been taking place in the entire culture of purity/impurity due to the processes of industrialisation, urbanisation, westernisation, modernisation, secularisation, rationalism, humanitarianism, and mere exigencies of modern life, roughly with the beginning of the British rule in the early 19th century (see Srinivas 1966) The upper castes who were the first to take western education were also the first to change their purity/pollution behaviour, in the domestic as well as the public sphere This change occurred first in urban areas, and gradually affected rural areas Its pace increased with the pace of urbanisation during the second half of the 20th century, and is likely to be faster during the 21st century (see A M Shah 2007b)

A few examples may suffice The taboo on cooking and eating food without taking bath has more or less disappeared in most urban homes Women in menstrual period are no longer prevented from cooking and serving food, except in orthodox homes They move freely in all parts of the home, except the corner for worship The prohibition on eating food with footwear on has disappeared, not only outside but even inside the home There is no difference between *kaccha* and *pakka* food as regards their relative purity Many people now do not take purificatory bath on returning home from a funeral, let alone after receiving news of death

from long distance of a relative's death Even when a bath is taken, it is much less elaborate than in the past The period of pollution arising from childbirth is reduced or is not observed at all in many homes Many people do not mind touching a woman who has given birth to a child In fact, the father, grandparents, other relatives and friends are expected to visit the mother in the hospital and take the newly born baby in their hands, without bothering to take purificatory bath afterwards Hardly any one now takes purificatory bath on returning home from a train or bus journey or from visiting a hospital Most men after hair cut and shave by a barber are no longer required to take purificatory bath to remove pollution and resume normal life There is hardly any concern now for avoiding the use of articles of leather and for avoiding contact with craftsmen working with leather, except in the sanctum sanctorum in temples and in the corner for worship in the home Many of those 'petty' pure/impure behaviours connected with cooked foods and their ingredients in the kitchen, with lavatory and urinal, and with a myriad other contexts and situations, are becoming less and less common

Just as the concern for purity/pollution has declined in the domestic and personal domain, it has also declined in relations between castes The prohibition on exchange of food and water between castes is hardly visible in urban areas People of all castes eat food at restaurants and hotels without bothering to inquire about the caste of the cook, the waiter, and the person sitting on the adjoining seat Similarly, at meals served during weddings and such other occasions, members of different castes are not seated any longer in separate rows (*pangats*), nor are they bothered about who cooks and serves food Members of higher castes, including Brahmans, now eat in lower caste homes This freedom of food transactions is spreading in rural areas, and will spread faster with the increasing pace of urbanisation

The concern for purity/pollution continues to be the strongest in the field of religion For example, even highly westernised and modernised men and women do not worship their deities without taking bath Women do not perform the *puja* in the home or the temple, or fix the dates of weddings and other important rituals and ceremonies, during their menstrual period They even time this period with the help of modern drugs to suit the dates of important rituals and ceremonies

Temples continue to be attributed massive purity Temple rituals, particularly in the great temples of Hinduism, are far more complex than most devotees assume them to be In fact, most devotees have very little knowledge of what goes on in a large temple, particularly in the sanctum sanctorum Ideas of purity/impurity permeate it in more complex ways than they do the life outside it Nevertheless, even here some relaxations

in the concern for purity/pollution have taken place, particularly in the smaller and local temples

At the other end, the most visible expression of untouchability, even in urban areas, continues to be the job of cleaning streets and collecting garbage exclusively by the members of the Scavenger caste, and they are also segregated usually in their own streets In practically all other spheres of urban life, overt untouchability has disappeared Not only is there no concern among upper castes for avoiding physical contact with the Untouchables, but the Untouchables too have no difficulty in eating with other castes in public places such as restaurants and hotels There are still some subtle forms of avoidance, but they are on their way out Upper caste children in urban areas now grow up without any experience and even knowledge of untouchability in schools, buses, trains, restaurants, etc When they go to college, they come under the impact of modern ideas of eradication of untouchability To such children, if untouchability seems irrational, the reservations for the Untouchables *qua* untouchables in educational institutions also seem irrational This attitude can no longer be called ancient prejudice against the Untouchables

As mentioned earlier, with the increasing pace of urbanisation the trend towards decline in untouchability will intensify It is also likely to spread to villages For example, a villager travelling to a city on bus or train does not know the caste of the passenger sitting next to him, of the person taking tea with him in a tea-shop, of the clerk dealing with him in an office, or of the shopkeeper from whom he buys goods He will also not take purificatory bath on returning home from the journey

Positive changes are taking place in village society also In his study of untouchability in Gujarat I P Desai (1978) has observed that, in all matters in what he calls the public sphere (i e , where the government is involved), untouchability is no longer a problem in such matters as the seating arrangement for Untouchable children in schools, the delivering of letters by a higher caste postman to an Untouchable, and the handing over of postal stamps by a post office clerk to an Untouchable There is considerable decline in untouchability even in what Desai calls the private sphere in such matters as an upper caste man touching an Untouchable labourer while involved in agricultural work, and an upper caste shopkeeper giving goods to and receiving money from an Untouchable customer The most important general change is that while an upper caste person may avoid touching an Untouchable, if he happens to touch him, he does not take purificatory bath as in the past The punctiliousness with which untouchability was observed in the past has declined considerably even in villages

In pre-modern India the concern for purity/pollution decreased as one went down the ladder of caste hierarchy In modern India, however, there is a two-way change While among the upper castes this concern is decreasing due to westernisation and modernisation, it is increasing among the lower castes, including the Untouchables, due to sanskritisation Let me give one illustration In a section of the Untouchables in Gujarat I have observed recently, the wedding and other rituals are as Sanskritic as among the higher castes Consequently, there is an increasing demand for the services of Garo priests mentioned earlier The demand has grown so much that the government department for social welfare has been organising since 2000-01 a training course in *Karmakand* (corpus of Sanskritic rituals) for them This two-way change has brought about a certain cultural uniformity, which has contributed to freer interaction between the upper castes and the Untouchables Another factor is westernisation and modernisation of the new middle class among the Untouchables

V

In modern India, a number of social reform movements have worked for eradication of untouchability, and after independence the government has enacted laws and devised programmes to do the same All these efforts have of course had their positive impact However, the pervasive decline in the concern for purity and pollution among the upper and middle castes has also been a potent factor in the decline of untouchability For present day children in these castes in urban areas, it is a silent and largely unconscious change, so much so that I wonder if the idea of untouchability exists in their cognitive map

Let me hasten to clarify that I do not maintain that untouchability has disappeared completely in Indian society I am aware of the terrible atrocities committed on the Untouchables from time to time in different parts of India, of the many disabilities and indignities suffered by them, of the discrimination practised against them in various walks of life, and so on At the same time, it would be a mistake to think that no positive change has taken place All available information indicates that at least some of the higher castes among the Untouchables have been able to get out of the trap of untouchability

As social scientists we have a duty to assess the nature and extent of social change In this assessment, we would not be able to go very far if we use the category Untouchable, Depressed Class, Scheduled Caste, Harijan, or dalit as an undifferentiated one[7] We should investigate whether all the castes included in any of these categories are affected by

change uniformly, as also whether all the castes included in the category 'upper caste' or 'non-Untouchable caste' behave in the same manner We should try to know which of the Untouchable castes are the normal victims of discrimination, and investigate their social profile, rural or urban, upper class or lower class, educated or uneducated, and so on On the other hand, we should investigate the social background of the perpetrators of discrimination Such information is rarely collected, and if collected, not published In this process the problems of the lowest among the Untouchables, the worst sufferers, get ignored

I understand the politicians have reasons to go on using the category Untouchable or dalit without differentiation The media persons too seem to have their disabilities They could be unaware of the complexity of the problem, or are afraid of the law prohibiting the use of caste names, or are in such great hurry to flash stories about the dalits that they rarely investigate the details of the dalit castes involved in an incident They go on using the word dalit without any differentiation, and thus create false images of the situation in public mind Consequently, social scientists do not get the kind of help they would expect from the media in getting information towards the goal of understanding the changing social reality

Be that as it may, I do not understand why social scientists should ignore reality [8] Are they also in a hurry? Have they come to the conclusion that the original decision of the government according to the Constitution, which identified a number of different Untouchable castes and placed them in a schedule, calling them Scheduled Castes, has become irrelevant? If so, then why have the schedule at all? Also, why should there be a statutory requirement for an Untouchable to obtain the certificate of his/her membership of a specific Scheduled Caste for getting the benefits to which s/he may be entitled? Have the dalits become an undifferentiated mass? Have separation and hierarchy among the dalit castes disappeared? Have the different dalit castes given up the rule of caste endogamy? It has become a taboo to talk or write about all this in public Ignoring social facts and throwing them under the carpet in this manner, however, is neither in the interest of social science nor in the interest of bringing about desirable social change

Notes

This is a revised and enlarged version of the text of my valedictory address at the All India Sociological Conference held at Chennai on 29 December 2006 I thank B S Baviskar, Lancy Lobo, Tulsi Patel and N R Sheth for comments on the draft of the article

1 For further elaboration of the career of these terms, see Charsley and Karanth (1998, especially Chapters 1 and 2)

2 The Turi, a small caste of bards among the Untouchables in Gujarat, is another example It is part of several bardic castes in Gujarat and Rajasthan (see Shah and Shroff 1958)

3 Strictly speaking, the government list of Scheduled Castes is not fixed The government does consider from time to time proposals to include or exclude castes in it However, it has remained more or less stable since 1952

4 In our general thinking on untouchability, we rarely take cognisance of urban Untouchables However, we should realise that almost all the Untouchable castes living in rural areas used to have urban counterparts even in the past, and the latter s life was different in many respects Their population is now increasing rapidly Secondly, there were castes of certain specialised urban artisans and craftsmen who did not have rural counterparts

5 Note that skinning of a dead animal and tanning the skin was highly polluting, and so were, therefore, the skinners and tanners However, leather resulting from skinning and tanning was less polluting, and so were the craftsmen working with leather Upper caste treatment of the skinners-and-tanners and the leather craftsmen was, therefore, variable

6 For some more ethnographic data from Gujarat on this issue, see my paper 1987

7 For a more detailed discussion of differentiation of the 'dalit' category, see A M Shah (2002)

8 Take, for example, the recent book on untouchability in rural India written jointly by five authors (one political scientist, one economist, two sociologists, and one activist), based on an extensive all-India survey (G Shah *et al* 2006) They clarify that their work is confined to castes included by the government in the list of Scheduled Castes (*ibid* 37) They are also aware that 'All Scheduled Castes do not experience untouchability to the same degree ' However, they go on to state, 'We did not specifically inquire into the question of who among the dalits experience more untouchability and in which sphere' (*ibid* 171) Consequently, the book gives the impression that there is no differentiation among the dalits regarding the various aspects of their life the authors have surveyed

R S Khare's otherwise sophisticated work on the Chamars of Lucknow (1984) does not include even a passing reference to the multiplicity and hierarchy of the Untouchable castes, neither in Uttar Pradesh nor in India as a whole The non-Untouchable castes are also conceived narrowly – mainly Brahmans Many of the general theories about the Untouchables are, therefore, based on a weak empirical foundation

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A Sociology for Happiness: Beyond Western versus Non-Western Perspectives

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The present paper presents a theoretical and empirical perspective of sociology for happiness which goes beyond western versus non-western perspective Two basic views of happiness, active and passive, are derived speculatively, from each of which two further types, modest and expansionistic, are elaborated Empirical analysis of the data suggests that the Japanese people have different types of views of happiness A Boolean approach is also used to find that there are two different ways to become happy in rich and poor countries as suggested by macro data from the World Value Survey and Human Development Index We conclude that an E-dictionary or encyclo-paedia of sociology, called Socio-paedia, *for collecting local know-ledge on happiness and the ways to achieve happiness is needed to reach global and universal knowledge*

[Keywords Boolean approach, happiness, human development index, local knowledge, *Socio-paedia*]

Introduction

We may recall that Emile Durkheim was arguing against Herbert Spencer and the utilitarians by maintaining 'that society cannot be derived from the propensity of individuals to trade and barter in order to maximize their own happiness' (Coser 1971 135) Durkheim (1893) criticised Spencer by equating him with the utilitarians, and stated that they both lacked insights into the 'non-contractual elements of contract' which are prevalent as the implicit social norms among people This problem, well-known as the Hobbesian problem, was later addressed by

Talcott Parsons (1937), who saw it as the problem of social order It is interesting to note that Spencer (1851) also sustained his criticism of utilitarianism by arguing that Jeremy Bentham's idea of 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' was only a step away from mere egoism Bentham failed to see the functions of the state which, Spencer expected, should be limited to prevention of injustice generated by egoism One of the main writings of Spencer, *Social Statics*, was even subtitled *The Conditions Essential to Human Happiness* Here then are two theoretical issues for sociology to tackle social order and human happiness

However, as a result of history of sociological currents, the social order issue was explored rather in depth, whereas the issue of happiness was left behind Indeed, we have quite a large body of writings in normative sociology (the Rawlsian approach, Libertarian-Communitarian disputes, the Habermasian theory of communication, to name only a few), but the keyword of happiness has remained intact to form a marginality of academic interest In this paper, I want to shed light on the problem of human happiness or well-being, both from a theoretical and empirical point of view, mainly in the light of tasks of sociologists facing internalisation of sociology in a globalised world

Sociologists coming from every corner of the globe meet each other at international conferences and business meetings in an academic world more than ever before Sociologists communicate with each other through the media of journals and publications more than ever before As was stressed by Alfred Schutz (1996), social scientists are supposed to work with 'constructs of constructs' That is, scientists describe, analyse and explain, by way of constructs, those constructs and 'interpretations of the social world which those acting within it have bestowed upon it' (*ibid* 143) 'The social scientist takes the attitude of a disinterested observer' and 'scientific constructs have to live up to the ideals of clarity, distinctness, consistency' (*ibid*) But it has remained fuzzy, even in Schutzian theory of knowledge, how a social science researcher can dissociate himself or herself from being a member of those ordinary actors living within a particular social world Social scientists develop and are educated, in certain ways of manners, and experience social life, again, in certain ways, which are more or less determined by one's socio-economic familial background In such a situation, can the sampling of constructs on the first level be unbiased?

Social scientists cannot live on every corner of a society as part of their own direct experiences, although they might be able to empathise with others' lives and trace others' experience as if they and it were their own Here then is one serious problem for social scientists of representing

every social reality, singular or otherwise, which is lived by actors in the world The possibility is that one single social scientist can cover only limited aspects of social realities in the world, hence the necessity of social division of labour among scientists in the world The progressive internalisation of sociologists will assist this division of labour within an academic world

Another more serious problem exists in that some bias might be involved in the second level of constructs despite any and all efforts of scientists to be clear, distinct and consistent in formation of the second level of constructs This bias may be obscured, twisted and hidden, which is hard to discover or ascertain No scientist can claim universality of constructs on the second level unless he or she is unbiased So, all in all, social scientists have to come to terms with two different orientations individuation and universalisation In the following parts of this paper, I wish to show how this goal is achieved in the study of human happiness through my own experience of projects [1]

Two Basic Views of Happiness

During the process of implementing a series of our projects in the Sociology and Social Work Faculty at Kwansei Gakuin University in Japan, we have made the assumption that there are two basic views of happiness 'the active view of happiness' and 'the passive view of happiness' The active view of happiness holds that happiness can be obtained by actively searching for it and can be brought about by the satisfaction of obtaining it In contrast, the passive view of happiness is based on the assumption that happiness is transient, and that life is full of misfortunes Hence, happiness is procured unless we suffer some misfortunes In the earlier studies of happiness, priority had been given to the active view, whether consciously or subconsciously, and, as a result of this focus, the passive view has not received due attention despite its real existence This has been the case with the view of happiness of ordinary people as well as of the sociological studies I will now elaborate on this situation

Human culture has created myriad forms of desire a desire to be wealthier, a desire to live in security and comfort, a desire to lead a meaningful and joyous life, a desire to live a worthwhile life, and so on These desires, however, come with the involvement of 'others' as René Girard (1961) has claimed, and these desires are never fully satisfied This inability to satisfy one's desires usually intensifies the ungratified desires further The harder problem is that satisfaction of some people's desires may result in the sacrifices – abandonment or delay to a greater or lesser extent – of other people's desires

On the other hand, there is a fundamentally different view It is a desire to pray for *BUJI* (a trouble-free existence or state of being), a word discovered by the Japanese folklore studies For example, one would wish his or her family a safe journey abroad when seeing them off A family would wish that its breadwinner would come home safely when seeing him or her off every morning to work The modern world is so unpredictable and full of danger and insecurity that anyone can get trapped in some unexpected sort of incident or accident This desire for *BUJI* emanates from a desire for security and comfort without sacrificing others or bothering others Here is a description of the situation by Kunio Yanagita, a pioneering Japanese ethnographer

> One is anxious to listen to as well as to talk about old topics and new events in a community mainly because there are few such stories *BUJI* literally means that nothing new happens, everything is repeated from year to year as is expected, in agriculture, festivals and sociability It goes on and on even over years, and people want it (1975 Vol 21 72)

BUJI means the absence of misfortunes or insecurities Nothing spectacular happens, but nothing disastrous happens either that is the true sense of the word This may sound rather passive from the active view of happiness, but this passive state of being is regarded as the greatest happiness The concept of *BUJI* involves concern not only for oneself or the people around The concept is a spirally encompassing concept (Furukawa 2004) in the sense that for the *BUJI* of someone or someone's family, the community where he or she lives has to be kept in *BUJI*, and for the *BUJI* of a community, a larger global society involving the community has to be kept in *BUJI*

Let me quickly mention two ideas that are seemingly related to the distinction between the active and passive view of happiness Human Development Index (HDI), which was first proposed by Mahabubul Haq (1995) and then further developed by Amartya Sen (2003), and is now much used by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and among nations of the world HDI is composed of three dimensions of human development (i) life expectancy (a long and healthy life), (ii) literacy rate (knowledge), and (iii) a decent standard of living Sen (*ibid*) points out, however, that HDI focuses on progress and augmentation in its basic idea and is extremely expansionist in nature It aims to cultivate and achieve new areas in order to improve human life HDI, he says, has to be complemented by the notion of human security, which prevents us from risks of suffering disadvantages and difficulties such as pestilence and abrupt penury HDI, in this sense, corresponds to the active view of

happiness, while the idea of human security corresponds to the passive view of happiness

The Bhutanese view of Gross National Happiness (GNH) has been proposed as an idea which is alternative to Gross National Product (GNP) This idea, as is well known, also seems to address the passive view of happiness as it emphasises that genuine human happiness lies not in the economic development as such, but rather in the sustainable and just socioeconomic development, conservation of environment, protection and promotion of culture and good governability (Dorji 2005, Ura 2006) This view apparently is in tune with what I have called the passive view of happiness based on the absence of misfortunes

These ideas contrasting human development with human security, or GNP with GNH, may be understood as implying the dichotomous perspectives of western versus non-western (Said 1978) where the western idea is dominant over the non-western A version of post-colonial theories, indeed, assumes that 'the intellectual and cultural tradition developed outside the West constitute a body of knowledge that can be deployed to great effect against the political and cultural hegemony of the West' (Young 2001 65) It also addresses the 'intellectual sovereignty and dominance of Europe' and 'limits of western ethnocentricity' (*ibid*) The dichotomous idea of the human well-being is easily conceptualised as western and non-western distinction, with the active view being linked to the western and the passive view linked to the non-western [2]

Empirical Facts and Analysis

The dichotomous idea of western versus non-western is, no matter how powerful and heuristic in elucidating aspects of knowledge which will remain unexplored otherwise, rather normative as well as descriptive and critical of the intellectual situation of dominance of the western No less important are how the ideas of happiness are actually manifest in each society We need to know the actuality

We conducted an exploratory study of happiness in Japan Through an analysis of our dataset acquired during 12-14 October 2005 via an internet survey (N=500), we identified four factors to determine the outlook of human well-being

(i) Active happiness,
(ii) *BUJI*-and-security,
(iii) Passive happiness, and
(iv) Secular type of needs

Active happiness consists of life components of increasing new friends, enjoying conversation with friends, enjoying sports, seeking new knowledge, and making contributions to society BUJI-*and-security* consists of one's own health, security without being involved in crimes or disaster, health of family, sound sleep, and having a spouse or steady life-partner or companion *Passive happiness* consists of activities such as watching TV, enjoying net surfing, spending one's time idly on holidays, and gambling successfully *Secular needs* consist of seeking status and fame, acquiring success opportunity and taking advantage of or at least having opportunities, and obtaining luxuries (Hamada and Kosaka 2006)

We could reach different conclusions by identifying different sets of factors depending on different questions with varied wordings being used in a questionnaire In our survey, we offered thirty-four brief statements as possible items people feel happy about (a 5-score indicating 'I feel happy' to 1-score indicating 'I do not feel happy') so that we could readily capture general tendencies However, it was found that there are two sub-types within both the active and the passive ideas of happiness, respectively The questionnaire was designed in tune with the Japanese societal scene and, hence, this finding holds true for types of societies like Japan which are highly industrialised and subject to the IT revolution, and with a mixture of Asian and western culture Therefore, we are unable to generalise the findings extensively across the countries

In order to complement this restriction of scope conditions, we explored the general mechanism to produce subjective well-being by using the global data We chose the subjective well-being data from the World Value Survey (WVS) as the variable to be explained By doing so, we incorporated the indigenously local value system concerning happiness as given into our analysis That is, we were unable to tell the background outlook or views of happiness of respondents, when they responded on the same scale of being happy or unhappy Indeed, the data on happiness across the world do not succeed in paying due attention to all the differences of a particular value system We should continue exploring the distinctive nature of subjective well-being On the other hand, we chose several variables which might affect the level of subjective well-being, mostly taken from World Value Survey and Human Development Index of UNDP We used the following variables as independent variables

H_i health of individuals	H_s health of a society
W_i wealth of individuals	W_s wealth of a society
C_i knowledge and controllability	E_s educational level of a society

The first three variables address conditions relating to individuals, while the latter three refer to the societal level conditions We used the Boolean approach (Ragin 1987) to determine the pattern where a set of independent variables has influence upon the dependent variable of subjective well-being, which will not be elucidated by the conventional statistical analysis Here is one of the analytical results minimised equation with a cut-off value 0 9 can be expressed as the following (Ishida, Kosaka and Hamada 2006)

SWB (Subjective Well-Being) =
$w_s\{H_iW_i(h_s+e_s)+ H_sW_iC_ie_s\} + W_s\{h_se_s(H_ic_i+W_iC_i) + H_iW_iC_iE_s\}$

In this equation, the capital letters denote the presence of the condition, while small letters denote the absence of the condition Addition of variables implies 'OR', while multiplication of variables implies 'AND'

The above formulation[3] suggests that there are two types of configuration of conditions (i) low GDP or poor countries, and (ii) middle or high GDP or affluent countries The patterns of determinants are different from each other In 'poor countries', there are two possible paths to feeling happy One feels happy if one is individually healthy and wealthy when the society is disadvantageous in terms of societal health (that is, longevity or life expectancy in this case) or societal educational level Secondly, in 'poor countries', one might feel happy if he or she is rather wealthy and is in control of life on individual basis, and simultaneously one's country is enjoying societal health but is low in educational level In 'affluent countries' also, there are two paths to achieve subjective well-being One path is the case where societal health and educational level are both disadvantaged, then, in this case one is happy when he or she is healthy but not in control of life, or is in control of life and wealthy at the same time A second path is the case where one is healthy, wealthy and in control with a high educational environment or surrounding This interpretation is not necessarily straightforward, but it is intriguing to find distinctive patters of determinants which are relevant to 'poor countries' and 'affluent countries', respectively

There still remains a large number of methodological problems we should solve in the future Before discussing the required strategies of study and the methodological agenda, let us digress further toward a theoretical hypothesis concerning two basic types of views from the above discussion which obligates us to go back and forth between theory and data

Types of Views of Happiness Reconsidered

Even if we retain the dichotomous distinction between the passive and active view of happiness, another dimension might be introduced, that is, the distinction between inclusive view and exclusive one Shin'ichi Nakazawa (2002), a Japanese scholar of religious studies, addresses, à la Shinobu Orikuchi (1931/1996), the meaning of *SACHI*, a word or concept in the Japanese language literally implying happiness, in line with his proposal of a reorientation to 'thing' and of a new interpretation of technology According to Nakazawa, *SACHI* is used to mean technology and the ability of transforming and embodying souls into, say, animals such as bear for hunting and eating In this view, successful hunting is happiness, which produces the modest amount of marginal profit incrementally to the hunter The action is more than an equivalent 1-1 correspondent exchange between cost and benefit for the hunter, that is, a gift from nature since it brings additional benefit over cost The successful hunter can live above the bare level of subsistence by obtaining an animal But at the same time, the action is no more than a minimum level of happiness in that the hunter is never allowed to devour, waste, or exploit the quarry

This image of *SACHI* seems to be tuned to the active view of happiness, but is a type of modest activity and ability *SACHI* brings happiness to those hunting, but only to the minimum level Therefore, *SACHI* never destroys other hunters, animals, or environments Ideally, then, we could envision two types of the active view of happiness one is modestly active as is implied by the original meaning of *SACHI*, and the other is extravagantly active in that the action destroys the animals and other human beings and environments, as well The latter is, perhaps, what was imaged by Sen – as 'focusing on progress and augmentation in its basic idea and is extremely expansionist in nature' (2003 8) – in his criticism of the notion of HDI

The term security also has a double meaning As long as it implies *BUJI*, it remains totally passive, that is, no one hurts anybody else while seeking security Who can be particularly hurt when one thinks of his or her family members' health, or when one spends holidays idly? As has been said earlier, the concept of *BUJI* is a spirally encompassing concept in that a larger society protects smaller social units within that larger society In this way of thinking the question is how can a larger society protect smaller social units? Of course, there will be a variety of ways to do so from the very modest way to the very aggressive way Haq (1995) explored the new emerging meaning of human security prior to Sen's (2003) formulation by noting that the old meaning of human security was

heavily intertwined with arms races among nation-states or the notion of state security, which implies that the second possible way of having security was to be replaced The notion seems to be quite opposite to the notion of *BUJI* It is characterised by both *Binnenmoral* and *Außenmoral* (Weber 1916) inner-moral of protecting people within and outer-moral of allowing exploitive and even aggressive behaviour Both types may be covered by the term security but, where one is defensive, the other is offensive, and is far from being passive

Table 1 Hypothetical Typology of Views of Happiness

	Inclusive/Modest	Expansionistic
Active	*SACHI*	HDI
Passive	*BUJI* Human Security	State Security

SACHI forms the active view of happiness but modest in nature, while the notion of HDI, at least its some elements, forms the active view of happiness, but is expansionistic, hence, exclusive in nature On the other hand, *BUJI* and the notion of human security is inclusive and modest, while the notion of state security is expansionistic and exclusive This typology, when coupled with the empirical findings of different paths to subjective well-being between poor countries and affluent countries, leads us to further speculation Our hypothesis from speculation is as follows the path for happiness for poor countries consists of the combination of active and passive but inclusive/modest type of views, while the path for happiness for affluent countries consists of the combination of active and passive but exclusive/modest type of views We admit that there exists a large amount of variation among people within each country, and/or in some countries there exist terrible civil wars To be succinct, one way of becoming happy may stand in the way of the other of becoming happy, although the Boolean formulation that we derived above does not say much about the contradictions or obstacles

The dichotomous idea of western versus non-western perspectives is sometimes appealing and heuristic But it is likely to be ideological unless conditions, general and historical, are explicitly specified to note the difference in relation to the theoretical problem we face In this sense, I believe that this dichotomous idea is the last resort we could rely on in the analysis

Methodological Tasks

Methodological tasks are three-fold The first concerns strategies of investigation in general The second concerns some technical, but not

trivial, methods and data collection The third concerns some intellectual apparatus to bridge and integrate individuation and universalisation

Two Strategic Orientations of Study

During the course of investigation of human well-being and its determinants, we encountered two different levels of tasks one is to pursue indigenous culture rooted in local knowledge among local people and the other is to analyse social groups concerning the outlook of happiness Not only may people from different regions have different outlooks on happiness, but also people in different age groups may have varied ways of thinking about and valuing happiness People's subjective well-being is determined by an array of objective elements and structurally different settings This is an intellectual path for us to follow of being idiographic There is another path to follow, which is the path of being nomothetic, to borrow the neo-Kantian terms, where we take a generalising, rather than historical, orientation to the phenomena we treat (Fararo and Kosaka 2003) In the generalising orientation, we are committed to a deductive rather than discursive form of theorising In the least, we want to summarize the given data and reduce the findings not in a statistical way, but in a logical way by using general concepts and theories as we did in the Boolean analysis

I shall summarise the two strategies of being idiographic and nomothetic in relation to a study of happiness Under the idiographic strategy, we explore detailed perception of happiness and objective factors which might determine the subjective well-being These findings will hopefully reflect local knowledge among people and the local social structure The dichotomous distinction of western versus non-western serves as a heuristic device in finding or discovering biased perceptions which would otherwise go undetected But we eventually want to know the very local knowledge which may not be categorised simply as either western or non-western Under the nomothetic strategy, we explore the underlying general mechanism to produce a link between subjective well-being (both the degree of feeling happy and the subjective views of happiness) and objective determinants

Methods and Data Collection

In the study of happiness, it is extremely difficult to go deeper into idiosyncratic investigation of subjective well-being and, at the same time, form a standardised set of variables for the purpose of a comparative analysis across nations, although both are indispensable If we pick up all the subtleties which are relevant only to a given society, we never

reach the standardised array of variables If we adhere to some standardised set of variables, this will not be sufficient enough to cover cultural diversities

Another dilemma lies in the split between the subjective side of data and the objective side of the data This is particularly the case with a large set of data which allows us a global comparison among nations WVS is oriented toward subjective measures, while HDI is oriented toward objective measures Once we combine those two sets of data, the number of equivalent variables is quite limited, since there are no one-to-one correspondences Most of the data combining subjective variables and objective variables is confined to national (that is, not international or global) indicators [4]

Towards *Socio-paedia*

We propose *Socio-paedia* as a possible project that the International Sociological Association could pursue jointly for many a year to come *Socio-paedia* is an E-dictionary or E-encyclopaedia which makes itself available on a website in the field of, mainly, sociology As such, entries will cover key sociological terms and concepts, theories, and sociologists similar to that which an ordinary dictionary or encyclopaedia of sociology does However, we also want to include other terms related to instantiations, historical and empirical, as an ordinary encyclopaedia might do as long as these terms, concepts, theories, and biographical information on sociologists seem to be relevant from a sociological standpoint which will be delineated below Since *Socio-paedia* is proposed specifically for social innovation and a better society on a global level, it anticipates a wide variety of readers such as researchers, NPO/NGO oriented people, administrative staffs, journalists and ordinary citizens as well as sociologists and students of sociology This is particularly relevant to a sociology for happiness Through *Socio-paedia* we could accumulate detailed knowledge about well-being and ill-being, and about 'missed opportunities' [5]

Our project of *Socio-paedia* serves as a means to reflect upon the distribution of local knowledge and its contents, whether true or false, in both the past and the present, in the world Here, local knowledge refers to knowledge accepted by one or another social group or society of people In other words, it is knowledge shared by a limited number of people in terms of geographic location, culture, temporality, and other social categories *Socio-paedia* aims at human well-being and social innovation as the ultimate goal and, therefore, we believe that *Socio-paedia* paves the way to a better world

Conclusion

We now arrive at our overall conclusion What is the meaning of 'internalisation of sociology'? How can it be achieved? From my own personal and professional experience of happiness studies to this point in my career I can conclude that internalisation of sociology is, firstly, a way and means that allows sociology capture all the subtleties and local knowledge through whatever the methodology may be required quantitative or qualitative, discursive or analytical This strategy may be summarised as an idiographic one, to use the neo-Kantian terms to classify the nature of sciences Secondly, internalisation of sociology is a way and means to let sociology capture general underlying mechanisms by employing for the most part a formal-theoretic approach (Fararo and Kosaka 2003) This strategy will be summarised as nomothetic strategy, again to use the neo-Kantian terms Neo-Kantian philosophers used these terms as terms to classify nature of sciences, natural and social, but here I use these terms as strategies within sociology, which are simultaneously required These two strategies can be achieved somehow beyond western versus non-western perspectives

Internalisation of sociology is, in this sense, to be realised in the endeavour to pay more attention to the relevance of local knowledge on the one hand, and universality of sociological knowledge on the other, and some following the project of forming an interactive type of sociological database, which I have here named *Socio-paedia* This project will address and indicate the future direction and tasks of sociology in a globalised world

Notes

1 I have been managing an important national programme called the 21st Century COE (Centre of Excellence) programme in Japan for the last four years The program is fully supported by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Government of Japan for five years This programme in Sociology and Social Work at Kwansei Gakuin University focuses on the Study of Social Research for the Enhancement of Human Well-being

2 A juxtaposition of positive view and negative view may be proposed independently of dichotomous cultural context Edgar Morin (1975) mentions two different conceptions of happiness (*bonheur*) in mass culture, although some elements are supposedly shared by those two projective and identifiable The projective conception of happiness always forms a myth and, hence, makes an ideology since happiness will be hopefully fulfilled only after one has experienced hardships and adventures ('happy-end') but in reality is never fully realised The more you achieve, the more you feel deprived The projective conception of happiness, then, is active in nature On the other hand, the identifiable conception of happiness is always based on one's past experience of 'used to be happy' You may not be happy at present, but

you surely used to be happy in the past which you readily remember, and which you can always tell what it was like This conception of happiness is easily linked to a passive view of happiness in that everyone must have experienced the state of *BUJI*, or the state of, at least, having been in the womb of one's mother, where nothing spectacular happens but where one can feel secure

3 Naturally, the Boolean approach allows us a number of minimisation, hence, a variety of formulations from which we choose a meaningful formulation for discussion depending on the context under study

4 See 'Guidelines for National Indicators of Subjective Well-Being and Ill-Being', in *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 7 (1), 2006 v-xii See also Social Indicators Research Series on Quality of Life (Kluwer Academic Publisher), which is informative of types of happiness studies

5 Project 'Missed Opportunities' was named by Robert McNamara when he proposed the joint US-Vietnamese project on the Vietnam War in 1995 He assumed that misperceptions, misunderstandings, and misjudgements during the entire course of the Vietnam War on, perhaps, both sides drove the escalation of the war McNamara, the former Secretary of Defence to US Presidents, and Nguen Co Thach, Vietnam's former Foreign Minister, agreed to examine the validity of either their own views or those of their adversary to see if there were missed opportunities to avoid casualties and human misfortunes (see McNamara 1999)

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Is Software Work in India Task Fragmented? – A Study of Software Workers in Bangalore

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Despite impressive amount of literature on Indian software industry, research on the nature of software work (programming) is inadequate, especially by the social scientists This paper attempts to fill the gap by examining whether task fragmentation (Taylorism) is present in the software work Data was collected from 114 software workers in Bangalore on a task inventory Statistical analysis of the responses did not support the task-fragmentation view It suggests that work content does not mirror the discrete stages of software production process, and there is no clear-cut division of conception workers and execution workers Some, India-specific, possible reasons are given to support the conclusions of the paper

[Keywords Bangalore, labour process, programming, task fragmentation, routinisation, Taylorism]

Success of the Indian software industry can be traced back to supply of programmers or software workers to US organisations (body-shopping) in the early 1990s that also filled the gap between greater demand and lesser supply of information technology (IT) workforce globally During the body-shopping phase, Indians worked as a part of a bigger team led by western workers (onsite) and did not possess control over the project Presently, Indian organisations develop and execute a part of a big project in (offshore), and hold responsibility for what they are doing, however control over the project lies with the clients or primary contractors

The logic of this globally distributed work, software services, between India and other countries, resembles subcontracting network between parent and subcontractor companies in conventional manufacturing

industries In other words, Taylorism or scientific management principles that are dominant in conventional capitalist organisations and manufacturing industries seem to be successful in the software sector as well This is contrary to the popular perception and industry's claims that programming is a 'knowledge work', and software workers are professionals who should not be equated to assembly-line workers Using quantitative analysis of work content, this paper attempts to find whether software work in India, subjugated to scientific management, is task fragmented

The paper is organised into five sections the first section introduces some basic concepts employed in the paper and that are useful for non-specialist readers, the second section reviews the extant literature on task fragmentation of software work, the third section presents the methodology followed, the fourth section discusses the findings, and the fifth section concludes the paper

I
Basic Concepts

Software

IT includes computer hardware and software as well as the peripheral devices most closely associated with computer-based systems (Freeman and Aspray 1999) According to Meadows *et al* (as cited in Heeks 1996 26), *hardware* is the mechanical, magnetic, electronic and electrical devices that make up a computer, and *software* consists of series of programme instructions needed to direct the computer to do a particular job It also includes the entire process of system analysis and design, programming, testing and implementation, as well as the documentation that accompanies the process Software can be produced by writing the instructions with pen and paper, and then feeding them into the computer Hardware and labour are the two necessary inputs to the software production process

Software when produced in a standardised form for general sale is called as *software package* When the software is produced only for a single customer it is called as *custom software* Application software products are programmes that are designed to carry out specific tasks, or applications Word processing programmes or database programmes come under this category System software controls the operation of the total computer system System software consists of compilers (which translate software language instructions into machine language instructions which the computer can obey) and operating systems (which act as

interface between the computer and the user, and between the computer and the applications programmes) Although, for analytical purposes, software packages are taken as goods and custom software as services, the boundaries between data services and other goods and services are unclear (Castells 1996, Heeks 1996) To quote Castells, software packages 'merge inextricably their information content with the material support of the product, making it impossible to distinguish the boundaries between "goods" and "services"' (1996 205)

Software Production Process

Software production process can be broken into a series of differentiated, standardised steps or stages Idea/Problem identified → Justification/ Feasibility → Analysis and specification of the software requirements → Designing software → Coding/Writing software → Testing → Software delivery and installation This process is called waterfall model of software development or system development life cycle (SDLC), and is commonly used in Indian software industry (Heeks 1996, Arora *et al* 2001)

The earlier stages of analysis and design require higher levels of skills and experience, whereas those of coding and testing are relatively less skill-intensive but more labour-intensive (Heeks 1996) In other words, analysis and design represent *conception* (head work) and coding and testing represent *execution* (hand work) dimensions of work Low-skilled software work is outsourced to developing countries to exploit the cheap technical labour (Schware 1987) To quote J Miller,

> Far from engaging in the high value added, creative and design intensive practices of software development that are today typical among software producing firms in the industrialised countries, professional software trade among firms in developing is commonly limited to low value, repetitive, activities like coding and testing (2000 2254)

Software work

'Programming' is the most commonly used term to denote all the activities present in the software production process It is also denoted by other terms like data processing, software engineering (Brooks 1975), information systems work (Orlikowsky 1988) and information-technology work (Friedman 1990) In this study, the term 'software work' is used to denote all the activities involved in software production process

Task Fragmentation

The essence of task fragmentation is derived from Taylor's scientific management principles *Task fragmentation* can be defined as a process by which work in an organisation is rationalised and standardised (Hage 1995a, 1995b) It involves various processes such as design in the jobs by managers, detailed division of labour, separation of planning from execution, and reduction of skill requirements and job learning times to a minimum (Watson 1995) This process is also called as *Taylorism* and *Fordism*, or capitalist division of labour (Yates 1999), or routinisation (Kraft 1977, 1979) Because of task fragmentation in software work, low-level software workers would be performing the routine work that does not require any analytical or creative skills, and high-level workers would be performing conception work that requires analytical or creative skills (Greenbaum 1976, 1999, Kraft 1977, 1979, Kraft & Dubnoff 1986)

Indian Software Industry

Indian software industry is growing rapidly – from US $ 1 1 billion in 1993-1994 to US $ 37 3 billion in 2005-2006 (Nasscom 2006), and software work is one of most preferred work among educated youth in India (Spaeth 2000) The industry directly employs 1 2 million people (Nasscom 2006) and software workers are the most highly paid workers in the country (*Dataquest* 2006) India provides a fertile ground to test the task fragmentation hypothesis, as the industry is predominantly an exporter of low-skilled software services and its workers are called as foot soldiers of global software industry

Although the industry is being imitated by many developing countries as a tool for economic development, it is plagued with various problems lack of globally visible products with poor product orientation and innovation, weak domestic market, over-dependency on US market, poor venture capital environment, scarcity of middle-level managerial workers, market dominance of fewer larger firms, and want of improved information and communication infrastructure (Arora *et al* 2001, D'Costa 2002, Dossani and Kenny 2002, Kumar 2001, Tagana and Kaul 2006) It has been repeatedly suggested by the literature and the industry representatives to address the above issues

II
Task fragmentation in Software Work

In the literature on task fragmentation there is a debate between two opposing camps Marxist social scientists and practitioners Using the

Marxian framework, J Greenbaum (1976) gave a historical analysis of transformation of software work from craft activity to a conventional industrial work in three phases 1950-1965, 1965-1970 and 1970-1975 According to her, the first phase denoted the early computer use and there was no clear-cut division of labour The software work remained as a craft activity in this phase Greenbaum called the second phase as 'capital takes control' In this phase, 'programmers' were separated from 'operators' at the work place, and a new occupational sub-group – 'systems analysts' – emerged The systems analyst developed procedures to process information and determine the method and solution to business problems, and programmers translated these solutions into a language the machine could understand In this phase, division of labour had emerged with different task sets, pay scale and training requirements

In the last phase, there was oversupply of software workers and 'the skills required for application programming were becoming less each year' (*ibid* 52) According to Greenbaum (*ibid*), this process of transformation of software work from craft to industrial work was associated with the use of high-level languages, rigid hierarchy in the organisations, institutionalised training systems and separation of 'hand' tasks and 'head' tasks in the software work

P Kraft (1977, 1979) in his pioneering study on software work concluded that software work had been routinised and, that certain occupational sub-groups in the software work would be deskilled He observed that software work was no more a craft activity, and activities involved in software work were divided into *conception* and *execution* tasks to bring Tayloristic management principles active in the organisation He identified three instruments for the routinisation of software work use of high-level languages, canned programmes and structured programming According to him, through structured programming, software development process has been standardised A project would be divided into smaller modules and each module would be given to the separate group of 'programmers' These 'programmers' engage in activities, which do not need any analytical skills to perform Moreover, a programmer, working in a module would not be having knowledge about other modules By doing the execution part of the work, programmers experience routinisation They have less work autonomy and perform more routine work in their work To follow Kraft.

> in complex systems, each fragment could be so narrow and restricted that it was essentially coding exercise, making no sense to the person doing the work

> Structured programming, in short, is the software manager's answer to the assembly line, minus the conveyer belt but with all the other essential features of a mass production work place a standardised product made in a standardised way by people who do the same limited tasks over and over without knowing (or needing) how they fit into the larger undertaking (1979 149)

Through a quantitative study, P Kraft and S Dubnoff (1986) observed that task fragmentation is present in software work They prepared a list of activities and asked the workers how much time they spent on each task By using small-space analysis, they were able to show that two sets of clusters of workers emerged with conception and execution tasks The execution workers do not participate in any of the planning activities in the firm To quote Kraft and Dubnoff,

> There are well-defined clusters of tasks which show remarkably little overlap, especially considering the age of the occupation There is an office where policy is made and selling is conducted A second tier of managers supervises and evaluates designers, who in turn specify and oversee the work of the technical "detail men" (and women) who actually make the systems and applications software Finally, there is a group whose function is to grease the wheels and keep the customers happy The people make the decisions and set the specifications rarely write code or manuals or test software Conversely, the people who actually do the software work almost never make decisions about the hardware or software they use, the programmes they work on, or the direction of their organisation (*ibid* 191)

The second view criticised the earlier view for the lack of understanding of software work and political bias (see Orlikowsky 1988) It proposes that software work cannot be task fragmented or routinised like any other industrial work due to its certain characteristics But this view is not supported by substantive empirical studies No holistic study like Kraft's (1979) or Kraft and Dubnoff's (1986) has been conducted to prove that software work is not routinised, or task fragmentation is absent in software work The arguments in favour of this view are from the reviews (Friedman 1990, Orlikowsky 1988), and descriptions from personal experiences of industry experts (Greenspun 2000, Glass 2001, 2005) or studies done on non-commercial trainees (Glass *et al* 1992)

It is also observed that software firms were new type of production organisations, where the workers could not be characterised as workers in traditional factories (Cusumano 1991) It is difficult to increase the software worker's productivity by the division of labour principle, that is,

by breaking down the tasks into elementary operations Software work would differ from conventional mass production work A good worker might have ten times greater productivity than an average worker (Brooks 1975, Greenspun 2000) Unlike mass production work, influx of more number of workers in a project would not guarantee the project completion before time As a matter of fact, in adding new workers to a project more time would be spent on co-ordination and training of new entrants and subsequently project would be delayed (Brooks 1975)

According to the proponents of the second view, software work could be a less *saturated* work Even if tasks were relatively integrated, complete closure of space for play in the structure of skills is difficult to achieve That is, the worker has enough space to use his/her creativity and imagination in the work Software work is such that the worker can solve the problem in many possible ways and how exactly he/she is expected to arrive at the solution is not yet codified (Aneesh 2001) Software work is highly 'mental'labour' intensive In software industry, organisation's dependency on individuals' capacity is greater, and organisation's competency in the market is determined by the nature of workforce it holds Thus, software work skills participate in both labour and capital markets (Stinchcombe and Heimer 1988) Moreover, absolute managerial control over workers is not possible, because of existing unequal relationship between expertise and experience in the work (Greenspun 2000) For example, a worker with 10 years of experience in *Unix* may be inferior in *C++* based work

There is also a mixed view about software work Like in other conventional industries workers resist the task fragmentation efforts through micro politics (Beirne *et al* 1998) According to Cusumano *et al* (2003) and Matsumoto (1994), the Neo-Tayloristic approach to software-development process through standardisation was partly successful in the late 1960s and the early 1970s in certain kinds of projects. which could be developed using earlier projects, or similar nature of projects However, for totally new or innovative design projects, less-structured organisational forms, special projects, laboratories or subsidies were followed, which gave software workers more freedom to invent and innovate (Cusumano 1994, Greenspun 2000) 'Software projects typically involve a combination of complex problem solving with the need for a certain amount of innovation, yet much of the software development is also routine and calls for dependable, predictable tactical performance (Constantine 1993 41)

This mixed approach is extended by R Barrett (2001, 2004) who concluded that there is no one best way by which software workers can be controlled, and it depends on various factors like nature of software

work, whether product or services, nature of labour markets etc To quote Barrett,

> The case study emphasised the dialectical relationship between autonomy and control In effect, managers, facing the heightened indeterminacy of creative employee's labour, walked a tightrope between autonomy and getting profitable work done by the deadline For employees, this necessity of profitability meant autonomy was limited to the use of their skills and their time Management could have increased profitability by routinizing the work, but employees would have left, which would be how they would express their resistance, as the work would no longer fit their social identity (2004 790)

Despite the growing attention on the Indian software industry by the researchers, inferred by special issues brought by journals (see, for instance, *Science, Technology and Society*, Vol 7, No 1, 2002), research on the nature of softwaie work seems to be inadequate M Prasad (1998) observed that activities as required by the quality certifications (ISO 9000 series) of International Standards Organisation (Geneva) in the process of software production were, in fact, used to enhance the managerial control rather than improving the quality of product being developed The quality certifications procedures in the software organisations use the structured programming that had the same effect as visualised by Kraft (1977, 1979) To quote Prasad,

> Techniques of 'effective programming practices', mainly extensive documentation but also modular programming, which breaks large programming tasks into small, independent tasks, make a company independent from any particular employee – in an exact parallel to Taylorist production practices of earlier decades (1998 444)

R Heeks (1996) inferred that software work in India is task fragmented According to him, Indian software industry is predominantly export oriented and the Indian firms execute projects outsourced by the western clients A project would be divided into four major stages (i) analysis and specification of software requirements, (ii) design of softwaie, (iii) coding/writing and testing of software, and (iv) software delivery and installation The first two stages would be completed in onsite and third stage would be outsourced to India Although software production process is an iterative process, the above model comes closer to the reality To quote Heeks,

> this model is a close enough approximation to reality, indicating that software development has been fragmented and standardised and, thus, made into a production process
>
> Software production overall is a skilled task, but this fragmentation forms the basis for a skill division of labour because the earlier stages of analysis and design require higher levels of skill and experience, whereas those of coding and testing are relatively less skill-intensive but more labour intensive (1996 5)

Based on a qualitative study, P V Ilavarasan and A K Sharma (2003) showed that work content in software work is not task fragmented and other institutionalised means of task fragmentation (career, training, quality certification, education and socioeconomic background) are not present in India Using quantitative analysis, the present paper tests whether task fragmentation is present in software work in India

III
Methodology

A task inventory was used by the study Task inventory approach involves developing a checklist of tasks that an incumbent on a given job might perform The subject matter specialists develop the tasks, and then incumbents are asked to indicate which tasks they actually perform and/or the relative time spent or relative importance of each (Nisi De 1995) I J Sanchez and L E Levine (2001) noted that ratings of task importance, time spent, and difficulty of learning provide relatively independent information

As required by the above method, a list of tasks was prepared for the study Sixteen tasks under four stages of software development were borrowed from an earlier study (Bailyn 1989) Sixteen more tasks were added by consulting two experts One has five years of work experience in a leading Indian software firm, and is pursuing Master of Technology in computer science and engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology (Kanpur) during the study The other person is a well-known expert in computer science and engineering, and had worked as Vice-President of a leading software firm in India Currently he is working as a professor of computer science and engineering at the Indian Institute of Technology (Kanpur) Then the task inventory was electronically sent to three more experts who have more than two years of work experience in software work, and they were requested to examine the task inventory for the exhaustiveness of the tasks involved in the work and the clarity of the inventory The tasks listed in the inventory could be roughly divided into

six categories, mapped on the successive stages of the software production process (see Figure 1) In the task inventory, each respondent was asked to mark how much of an activity is present in their work Five options were given for each task (i) never, (ii) occasionally, (iii) sometimes, (iv) frequently, and (v) very frequently The study assumed that frequency of occurrence of tasks indicates the amount of tasks performed by a worker in the job For example, if *coding* constitutes a major quantity of the job, the worker will be performing *coding* very frequently

Figure 1 Tasks included in the Stages of Software Production Process

1 Conception of idea for the software and preliminary analysis	
	Selling an idea to potential user; Determining user requirements, Estimating cost and time, Technical scooping/feasibility of the study, System specification in users/business terms
2 Designing	
	System architecture, Software architecture, System specification in technical terms, Writing programme specifications, High-level designing, Low-level designing
3 Writing	
	Coding, Documentation, Preparing house keeping programmes/data files
4 Testing	
	Debugging, Programme testing, Link testing, System testing, Internal reviewing, External reviewing
5 Delivery and Installation	
	User guides, Training users, First level support to the users, System maintenance and support User guides, Training users, First level support to the users, System maintenance and support
6 Others	
	Recruitment, Training of members, Evaluation of members, Firm level policy making, Module management, Project management, General administration

Data was collected on the task inventory from two software organisations located in Bangalore, during May-July 2001 One business unit with 450 employees from each firm was selected In each unit, respondents were selected using quota sampling method from various hierarchy levels Workers who are not involved in the software production or development process, like administration department, marketing department, were not included in the sample Each level was taken as a quota, and workers were selected using incidental sampling method within each category In each firm, 80 workers were given the questionnaire Finally, 114 filled questionnaires were returned

The study raises two operational hypotheses to test whether task fragmentation is present in software work in India

1 Work content mirrors software production process
2 Workers are divided into conception and execution workers

The stated operational hypotheses are null hypotheses (H0) and were tested through two statistical methods factor analysis and cluster analysis Factor analysis is a data reduction technique used to aggregate or classify variables (Bryman and Cramer 1990) If factor analysis of workers' responses on the task inventory mirrors the stages in software production process, one can conclude that the work is task fragmented Principal component analysis is an exploratory factory analysis method, and it is used in the study

Cluster analysis is used to classify subjects into similar sets or groups based on variable characteristics (Ketchen and Shook 1996) Non-hierarchical cluster analysis is preferred when a priori number of clusters is known before classifying the subjects In this study, non-hierarchical cluster analysis was used to classify the workers On the basis of responses to the task inventory, the study clustered the workers into four categories reflecting the first four stages of software production process If the resultant four categories of workers clearly indicate a division of labour as conception and execution workers, one can conclude that work is task fragmented

If the findings do not support the null hypotheses, we will conclude with the alternative hypotheses (H1)

1 Work content does not mirror software production process
2 Workers are not divided into conception and execution workers

IV
Discussion

Principal component analysis with varimax rotation was performed on the 32 tasks included in the survey Seven factors emerged which explained 68 per cent of the total variance of the data (see Table 1) The seven factors were tested for internal reliability by calculating alpha coefficients for each factor All the factors showed high reliability with coefficient above 0 6 (Table 2)

The composition of the factors clearly indicates that they do not reflect the discrete stages in the software-development production process For example, Factor 1 includes the following tasks writing specifications, low-level designing, coding, debugging, programme testing, link testing, documentation and preparing house keeping programs Within the same factor, tasks related to three different stages of

Table 1 Principal Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation of Workers' Responses on the Task Inventory

Task	Task Factor						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Debugging	839						
Coding	835						
Low-level designing	721						
Documentation	695						
Programme testing	691						
Link testing	598						495
Preparing housekeeping programs	532		424		392		
Writing programme specification	521			456			
Selling idea to users				413			
Estimating cost and time		840					
System specification in technical terms		783					
Technical scoping		739					
System specification in user terms		731					
Determining users' requirements		663					
Hi-level designing	432	549					
Evaluation of members		526	404				
Project management		513	400				
Firm-level policy making			724				
Auditing			653				
External reviewing			587				
Recruitment		416	543				
System architecture				833			
Software architecture				797			
Training users					829		
First level support to users					715		
User guide preparation					700		
System maintenance and support						755	
General management						608	
Module management						560	
Training						431	
Internal reviewing							730
System testing	472						708

Note Factor loading scores below 0 4 are not presented in the table

software production designing, writing and testing are present Other factors also entail tasks from various stages of the software production process Thus, the hypothesis is not supported The finding suggests that, though software production process involves discrete stages, there is an element of iteration in the actual work

Table 2 Reliability of the Task Factors

Task Factor	Alpha Coefficient
Factor 1	0 8773
Factor 2	0 8895
Factor 3	0 6775
Factor 4	0 7111
Factor 5	0 7211
Factor 6	0 6768
Factor 7	0 6412

The cluster analysis was performed on 32 tasks on task inventory for four clusters (see Table 3) Analysis of the work content shows that all the workers perform the activities related to both conception and execution tasks of software production process in their work For instance, coding and debugging, two of execution tasks in software development [in bold letters], are present in work content of all categories workers On the other hand, high level designing, a conception task [underlined], is also performed by all categories of workers (see Table 1) Though all these cited tasks tend to shift from 'very frequently' to 'sometimes' among workers, none of the workers exclusively performs conception or execution part of the software work

The Indian software workers do not form discrete set of components in an occupational pyramid like in conventional capitalist organisations They represent layers of skin present in an onion Among various stages of software production, they perform certain activities more when compared to others In a way, workers in the higher level partly perform activities of the lower level layer along with the activities dedicated to their own level In other words, Indian software workforce cannot be divided into 'conception/mind' and 'execution/hand' workers

V
Conclusion

Based on an empirical quantitative study conducted in Bangalore, this paper has examined task fragmentation of software work in India Proponents of the task fragmentation argue that software work is no more a craft and is successfully subjugated by the scientific management like any other conventional industrial work By performing factor and cluster analysis on workers' responses on task inventory, this study showed that task fragmentation is not present in software work in India

Apart from arguments given by the anti-task fragmentation camp, there are few reasons which could extenuate task fragmentation process

Table 3 Cluster Analysis of Workers Based on the Work Content

Frequency of the tasks performed	Activities of categories of workers
Category 1	
Very frequently	**Coding, Debugging**
Frequently	Documentation, Programme testing
Sometimes	Writing programme specifications, Low-level designing, Link testing, System testing, Internal reviewing
Occasionally	System architecture, Software architecture, Determining users' requirements, Estimating cost and time, Technical scooping, System specification in user terms, System specification in technical terms, High level designing, External reviewing, Preparing housekeeping programmes, User guide preparation, Training users, First level support to users, System maintenance and support, Training, Module management
Never	Selling idea to users, Auditing, Recruitment, Evaluation of members, Firm-level policy making, Project management, General management
Category 2	
Very frequently	
Frequently	Writing programme specification, High level designing, Low level designing, **Coding**, **Debugging**, Documentation, Programme testing, System testing, Internal reviewing
Sometimes	Determining users' requirements, Estimating cost and time, Module management, System specification in technical terms, System specification in user terms, Technical scoping, Software architecture, Link testing, General management
Occasionally	Project management, Evaluation of members, External reviewing, First level support to users, Preparing housekeeping programmes, Selling idea to users, System architecture, System maintenance and support, Training, Training users, User guide preparation
Never	Firm-level policy making, Recruitment, Auditing, General management
Category 3	
Very frequently	High-level designing, Low level designing, Programme testing, Link testing, Internal reviewing
Frequently	Determining users' requirements, Estimating cost and time, Technical scoping System, Specification in technical terms, System specification in user terms, Writing programme specification, **Coding**, **Debugging**, Documentation, System testing, Module management, Project management
Sometimes	Software architecture, Evaluation of members, External reviewing, First level support to users, Preparing housekeeping programmes, Selling idea to users, System architecture, System maintenance and support, Training, Training users, User guide preparation, Auditing
Occasionally	Firm-level policy making, Recruitment
Never	

Table 3 continued

Category 4	
Very frequently	
Frequently	Determining users' requirements, Estimating cost and time, Technical scoping, System specification in technical terms, System specification in user terms, Writing programme specification, **Coding**, **Debugging**, Documentation, System testing, Module management, Project management
Sometimes	High-level designing, Software architecture, External reviewing, Selling idea to users, General management, Recruitment, Module management, System specification in technical terms, System specification in user terms
Occasionally	Link testing, Low-level designing, Programme testing, System architecture, System maintenance and support, Training, Training users, Auditing, Firm-level policy making, Coding, Debugging, Documentation, System testing, Writing programme specification
Never	First level support to users, Preparing housekeeping programs, User guide preparation

in India Software work is performed in the form of project teams, and nature of work is highly dependent on the contracted projects Projects may be contracted in any stage of SDLC and vary in size, technology and clients The same set of workers is used by the organisations to work in different projects in different times Workers perform activities as per the roles assigned to them in the teams, not directed by the organisational job titles or descriptions Roles do not correlate with job title or description of the workers, and tend to vary for a worker from project to project For example, a worker is doing a role of coder in one project might perform testing or high-level designing in the subsequent project (Ilavarasan and Sharma 2003)

Though, in fewer projects, the Indian software workers are expected to strictly follow the clients' designs, there is adequate space for autonomy They have accessibility to the overall design of the project Since the integration of his/her part of work with the whole project is essential, modifications on the design suggested by the Indian worker, if any and inevitable, are incorporated Also, the career of the Indian software workers is similar across the industry (Arora *et al* 2001) All the workers join at the entry level and become project managers, inferring exposure to all levels in the software production process

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Microcredit for Microenterprises or for Immediate Consumption Needs?

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Microfinance programmes are instrumental in bringing about substantial changes in the lives of the poor, particularly women Access to credit from microfinance programmes enables women to become active players in their own economic life But often credit facilities are used for meeting the immediate needs of the family, rather than for productive ventures like self-employment micro-enterprises (SEM) In this paper, based on the data from Kerala, we look at the loan-use pattern of 1,116 women members in self-help groups who participate in microfinance programmes We find that a large majority of them have used loans for their immediate needs, rather than for SEM In order to make the women members economically independent and to assist them in earning a stable income, they need to be encouraged to use the loans for SEM through sustained financial and managerial support

[Keywords consumption needs, Kerala, microcredit, microfinance, self-employment microenterprise]

Introduction

Microfinance programmes, aimed at the poor and at impoverished women in particular, are primarily designed to assist them to escape from the tangles of poverty by helping them to make a sustainable living Women who participate in these programmes are supported to become less and less dependent on others, generally the male members in the family, and to start a living of their own, earning an income that they can control and manage Microfinance has also been instrumental in increasing

incomes and assets as well (Kabeer 1998) It is now accepted as a valid means and mechanism for increasing the productivity of the poor by addressing market failure in credit markets and harnessing market incentives (McGuire and Conroy 2000) One of the many assumptions of microfinance in developing countries is that the loans are the only financing system that can provide sufficient capital to meet the need for microenterprise finance (Pretes 2002)

Under microfinance programmes credit is open for a variety of purposes, ranging from immediate consumption needs to accumulation of assets However, the credit-users are consistently encouraged to initiate small income-generating microenterprises Self-employment microenterprises (SEM), with the support of the programme, assist women to stand on their feet and make them economically less dependent on others, including their kin In reality, women are constrained to avail and use loans for their immediate needs like consumption rather than for any productive purposes such as SEM Although loans are provided for specific purposes women use them for several other needs (Selim 1995), defeating the very purposes for which loans have been issued

M M Pitt and S R Khandekar's study (1998) of female entrepreneurs in Bangladesh reported that access to credit results in an increase in household consumption Comparing the figures for men and women, they further note that household consumption increases by 18 Bangladesh *taka* for every 100 *taka* lent to a woman and by 11 *taka* for every 100 *taka* lent to a man Even if they are entrepreneurs, as J Jiggins (1989) observes, the primary aim of the women borrowers is to ensure subsistence consumption for the members in their family M R Khan (1999) finds that, although the loans issued by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) are for definite purposes, as many as 40 per cent of them have used the loans for other needs R Mehra *et al* (1995) inform us that women borrowers, in order to maximise their resources and minimise risks to their own particular constraints, prefer to invest more in household consumption and human capital development such as the education of children and healthcare Khan (1999) also noted that married women members spend their income on household goods, food, children's education and clothing Women borrowers spend loans in a bid to increase their household income and to accumulate household assets including building houses, freeing land from mortgage, and acquiring land through mortgage or purchasing rickshaws Potentially, women are more likely to make use of their income on household consumption and security-related assets, while men borrowers spend it on productive activities (Kabeer 1998) Occasionally, as reported in the

study of self-help groups (SHGs) in Kerala, women members take loans for the benefit of others that include their husbands, brothers, sisters and parents (Sooryamoorthy 2005b) which is not necessarily for income-generating activities Marital status of women members therefore becomes a determinant in their loan-use (Sooryamoorthy 2005a)

Despite the use of loans for specifically unintended purposes, there is ample evidence to support the fact that participation in microfinance programmes leads to an increase in income, assets and self-employment opportunities of the entrepreneurial poor (Holt and Ribe 1991, Otero and Rhyne 1994) Self-employment activities definitely bring in an income, increase consumption levels, lead to a rise in the demand for children's education, and increase leisure (Morduch 1999) The small-scale enterprise credit borrowers in India could increase their incomes by 82 per cent after they had participated in the lending programme (Kahnert 1989, cited in Bhatt 1997 374)

These studies underline the effects of microenterprises on the lives of the poor, resulting in an increase in their incomes and improvement in their standard of living But the question is To what extent are women members making use of the credit opportunities that are available to them for productive entrepreneurial purposes and how can this be further encouraged to produce sustainable incomes for them?

The Study

Using survey data gathered from 1,116 members of 60 women's SHGs functioning in two districts (Alappuzha and Ernakulam) of Kerala, in this paper, we look at the utilisation of loans by the women members who participate in microfinance programmes of the selected SHGs In particular, we examine the extent of the use of loans for self employment microenterprises (SEM) among the members of the SHGs This is achieved (i) by analysing the loan-use of the members, in terms of the purposes for which their first two loans were used, and (ii) by examining the purposes of loan-use in terms of the classification of loans, namely, consumption and bank loans

It is argued in this paper that the women members in the SHGs of Kerala prefer to utilise the loans for their immediate consumption needs, health care and the education of their children, while only a minority turn to productive activities like microenterprises In order to increase their participation in microenterprises and use of loans for productive purposes, it is essential to encourage them to save more with the groups and to channel their savings into productive microenterprises for sustained livelihood

The SHGs chosen for this study were initiated and organised by a prominent NGO in the locality, the WIN Society, operating in the Alappuzha district of Kerala [1] At the time of this study in 2000, there were 190 SHGs working under the auspices of the WIN Society They were formed in 1997 or later [2] We have not included the SHGs which were formed in 2000, as it is premature to study them and make sense of their activities in the early stage of their inception The chosen SHGs, therefore, have a standing of at least a year at the time of data collection Except for those formed in 2000, there were 130 SHGs originated during 1997-99 which consisted of our sample frame Among these 130 SHGs, 72 were functional in the district of Alappuzha and 58 in Ernakulam district [3] We have selected 60 groups proportionately (46 per cent from each district) from the two districts (33 out of 72 from Alappuzha, that is, 46 per cent, 27 out of 58 from Ernakulam, that is, 46 per cent) This produced 46 per cent of the total 130 SHGs which, in other words, means almost every second SHG has been included in the sample In each SHG there were approximately twenty active members We were able to interview about 98 per cent of all the members, that is, 1,116 women members (the unit of the study) of the selected 60 SHGs The interviews, using a structured schedule consisting of both closed- and open-ended questions, were conducted mostly at the venues of the weekly meetings of the groups The members who could not be interviewed at their usual meeting places were contacted at their respective homes A group of trained investigators from the WIN Society were involved in data collection which was held during the months of November and December in 2000

Findings

Members

The number of respondents in each SHG varied from 10 to 22 with an average of 19 members, belonging to a rather young age group of an average age of 39 years (see Table 1) About 6 per cent of them were more than 60 years of age The average duration of membership in SHGs was 2 6 years Nine out of ten were married, and every tenth was either unmarried or widowed

Predominantly, the members were literate and educated Every second person had gone up to Standard VII, the upper primary level of schooling Another sizable number of them had an educational level (successfully completed) of Standard VIII to X About 8 per cent had gone beyond the school final and earned degrees/diplomas from college,

Table 1 SHG Members Basic Features

	Feature	Members
1	Marital Status (%) (N = 1,116)	
	Married	88 9
	Unmarried	9 7
	Widows	1 4
2	Mean age (in years) of members (N = 1,114)	39
3	Duration of membership (in years) (1,116)	2 58
4	Education (%) (N = 1,091)	
	Illiterate	2 0
	Primary	55 4
	High School	37 0
	College/Technical	5 6
5	Occupation (%) (N = 1,116)	
	Fishing-related/Wage labour	36 5
	Government jobs/Retired	0 9
	Business	6 8
	No occupation	55 8
6	Mean monthly income (N = 594)	423 4

technical or professional institutions Only 2 per cent have turned out to be illiterates in the sample

Close to 50 per cent were engaged in some kind of jobs such as wage labour, employment in fishing and peeling, small business (such as a pan shop), agriculture-related works or employed as government employees Around one-fifth of the total members and half of those who had any remunerative occupation were largely wage labourers Fishing and peeling came next in the list, with 12 per cent of the total members and 28 per cent of those who had any occupation

Regular income earners, such as government employees, teachers and retirees constituted less than one per cent of the sample Members reported an average monthly income of Rs 423 A large number of them (46 8%) did not have any source of income from any occupation at the time of interview

Savings, Loan-Use and Self-employment Microenterprises

Upon joining SHGs, women are required to contribute a sum of whatever they can afford, but on a weekly basis without default This is the mandatory weekly contribution of the members to the SHGs they belong to At the time of joining the SHGs, the average contribution of the members was Rs 11 which has been doubled to Rs 23 at the time of data collection This suggests that members are constantly building up their savings with the groups (Table 2) The weekly contribution serves as

collateral for the members to avail loans when they actually need them The amount of savings that have been accumulated in the form of weekly contributions not only determines the loan amount but also the possibilities for securing loans from SHGs Obviously, the members are predisposed to contribute more to their respective groups to save their earnings through regular weekly contributions The mean total savings of the members deposited with their respective SHGs during their entire membership period comes to a sum of Rs 1,434

Table 2 Savings and Loans of Members

	Variables	SHG Members
1	Initial weekly contribution (Rs) (N = 1,116)	11 27
2	Current weekly contribution (Rs) (N = 1,100)	23 03
3	Total deposit by members (Rs) (N = 1,106)	1434 26
4	Loans taken from SHG (%) (N = 975)	87 40
5	Consumption loans taken (%) (N = 843)	75 54
6	Bank loans taken (%) (N = 7)	0 63
7	Number of loans taken (N = 977)	2 39
8	Number of consumption loans taken (N = 975)	2 22
9	Number of bank loans taken (N = 173)	1 21
10	Total loan sum (Rs) (N = 975)	5528 19
11	Total consumption loans (Rs) (N = 962)	4456 37
12	Total bank loans (Rs) (N = 175)	6468 59
13	Monthly income of the members (Rs) (N = 594)	423 40
14	Loans taken for self-employment microenterprise (SEM) (%)(N = 109)	11 20
15	Sum of loans used for SEM (Rs) (N = 107)	6426 66

Almost 90 per cent of the members have accessed loans from SHGs during the period of membership in their respective groups Members are offered two types of loans namely, consumption loans and bank loans Consumption loans come out of the original savings of the members for any immediate and unforeseen needs The amount of the sanctioned loan, therefore, depends on the savings the members have in their groups at the time of seeking loans Members can apply for consumption loans if they have worked in the group for a minimum period of six months Bank loans, on the other hand, are usually approved for starting income-generating activities like SEM and for members who have been active in the group for at least one year prior to application Each member during the span of her membership with the SHG had taken an average of 2 39 loans, of which 2 22 were consumption loans and 1 21 were bank loans of varying amounts On average, as shown in Table 2, the members have

obtained loans to the tune of Rs 4,456 (consumption loans), Rs 6,468 (bank loans), and Rs 5,528 (total loans)

While 90 per cent of the members had used the loan facility, consumption or bank loans, only one in every ten had taken the loan for SEM This rate of SEM loan-takers, in contrast to that of consumption or bank loans, is abysmally low The average amount of loans taken and utilised for SEM so far is Rs 6,426 To understand the use of these loans, one has to look at the purposes for which they have been actually spent.

A condensed list of the purposes shows that the needs of the respondents ranged from domestic to social As presented in Table 3, debt payment, for both the first and second loans, takes up the larger shares of 32 to 42 per cent of the total loans accessed from the groups In both cases, the loans used for productive activities ranged from 15 to 21 per cent which means an average of 18 per cent per loan, whereas the average figure for debt payment is 37 per cent When the members joined the groups, most of them have had more pressing needs to meet, than to make use of the loans for any productive initiatives Paying back the existing debts, maintenance of houses, celebrations associated with birth, marriage and death in the family, and education of children take precedence over any sustainable income-generating purposes But, notably, the use of the loans for non-productive purposes, such as paying back old debts and domestic needs, record a declining pattern from first loans to second loans This, however, is not evident in the use of loans actually used for family celebrations

Table 3 Purposes of Loan Use

Purpose	Loans taken			
	First Loan		Second Loan	
	N	%	N	%
Debt payment	413	42 4	170	32 4
Domestic needs	157	16 0	71	13 5
Productive purposes	142	14 6	111	21 2
Maintenance	114	11 7	67	12 8
Marriage, celebrations	74	7 6	63	12 0
Helping others	49	5 0	16	3 1
Education of children	26	2 7	26	5 0
Total	975	100	524	100

Further analysis on the purposes for which loans had been spent against the type of loans is quite revealing We have classified loans into number of loans (first and second) and its subcategories of consumption, bank loans (Table 4) Most of them had spent their first loans mainly for paying debts, meeting more pressing domestic needs and for the

Table 4 Loan Use by Loan Categories

Loan Use	First Loan (%)*				Second Loan (%)*			
	Consumption Loan (N=843)	Bank Loan (N=7)	Both Consumption and Bank Loans (N=123)	Total (N=973)	Consumption Loan (N=422)	Bank Loan (N=3)	Both Consumption and Bank Loans (N=98)	Total (N=523)
Debt payment	43 9	28 6	42 3	33 3	32 2	0 0	34 7	32 4
Domestic needs	15 5	0 0	16 1	20 3	15 2	33 3	6 1	13 5
Education of children	2 7	0 0	2 7	2 4	5 2	0 0	4 1	5 0
Helping others	5 3	0 0	5 0	3 3	2 8	0 0	4 1	3 1
Maintenance	10 6	0 0	11 7	20 3	11 6	0 0	18 3	12 8
Marriage, celebrations	7 9	28 6	7 6	4 1	12 8	33 3	8 2	12 0
Productive purposes	14 1	42 8	14 6	16 3	20 1	33 3	24 5	21 2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Chi-square test significant at 05 level

maintenance of house Only 15 per cent could spend the loans for any productive purposes in the first instance But the pattern of loan-use records a change with the second loan in which the percentage of members that used loans for productive ventures have increased to 20 per cent, while the use for debt payment and domestic needs has declined For the maintenance of houses, there is a small increase of one percentage point in the second loan, while the use for celebrations continues to soar Another notable increase is in the education of children which has almost doubled in the case of second loans

An analysis of the type of loans (consumption and bank) is enlightening (Table 4) Consumption loans in the first instance (first loan) have obviously been used up mainly for daily needs and for other non-productive purposes, leaving only 14 per cent for productive investment and 3 per cent for education About 60 per cent of the members who received consumption loans spent them either on repaying their debts or on immediate domestic needs of the family A portion of these loans (11%) is also meant for the maintenance of the house and for marriage and other family celebrations (8%) Bank loans, due to the nature of the formalities involved and the conditions attached to their approvals, have been sought by very few members (16 per cent as against 87 per cent for consumption loans), which, however, have been spent on productive enterprises in the first instance In the second turn, bank loans have been equally shared among domestic, celebration and productive purposes The use of loans and the times of loans (first and second) taken are significantly associated

Discussion

SHGs assist the poor womenfolk in finding ways and means to access credit through the initiation of small groups in their own neighbourhoods, although the impetus for the organisation of the groups often comes from external catalysts such as NGOs and other agencies As in the cases of several successful experiments reported from other parts of the world, SHGs in Kerala too have proved to be an effective mechanism for the accumulation of small but regular savings of women that have been pooled for future use as loans The persisting challenge that these groups face, irrespective of the regions and countries where they now function, is to make use of the collected earnings of the poor for fruitful purposes that could generate sustainable income opportunities for the livelihood of the members As with their meagre income, the immediate family needs of the members have a compelling demand on their loans, ultimately constraining themselves from using the combined

savings of the members, available as loans, for productive ventures This is the reality and predicament, as opposed to that of men who are able to manage and use their finances the way they want to Our study too highlights this dilemma of the women members in SHGs The actual loan-use pattern of our women respondents shows that the members who participate in the microfinance programmes tend to access credit for consumption than for SEM initiatives Our respondents have used more than one-third of their loans for paying debts, maintenance and renovation of houses and celebrations

As against 90 per cent of the members who have availed consumption or bank loans from their respective SHGs, only 10 per cent have taken loans for SEM This finding compares well with that of earlier studies Evidence of microfinance programmes from elsewhere illustrates that women prioritise the use of credit for the immediate needs of their family such as consumption, educational needs of the children and medical requirements of the family members One argument for this spending pattern of women is that women have greater responsibility of expenditure on household consumption and their unpaid domestic work limits the resources and time they could invest in economic activity (Mayoux 1998) This is the case with our respondents too, who, belonging to the lower rungs of the economic strata of the society, shoulder the burden of running their family More often than not, women act as a breadwinner, if not the sole breadwinner, of the family entrusted with the larger responsibility of looking after their children and family members Most of our respondents, apart from engaging themselves in their daily household chores, seek odd jobs to support their family

The study points out that, in order to make the women working in SHGs economically independent and to bring in stability in their personal incomes, microfinance programmes have to increasingly emphasise the use of loans for SEM activities As evident in the literature on microfinance, women have the potential, skills and ability to succeed in microenterprises B Wydick's study (2002) among the credit users in western Guatemala, for instance, has noted considerable gender differences, with female entrepreneurs recording lower rates of programme drop-out and higher rates of employment generation The microenterprises run by women are found to be more stable than that of men borrowers working in similar circumstances

Importantly, there are two prerequisites for entrepreneurial success human and financial capital Loans matter only when skills and savings are present (Schreiner and Woller 2003) Access to credit alone is not a prerequisite that can stimulate women borrowers to turn to SEM for their livelihood Credit opportunities are to be tied up with support components

of training in organisational management of SEM so as to make the borrowers confident in manning their own microenterprises In the case of Kerala, the success of instilling in them the confidence to run a business of their own lies in the socioeconomic context of the society Irrespective of gender, Kerala is known for its poor levels of entrepreneurial initiatives which are believed to be the resultant effect of the poor infrastructure (particularly power), relatively expensive labour, highly organised and often militant trade unions, lack of support from the government, and a host of other factors Generally, the state does not appear to be an investor-friendly destination for entrepreneurs There have been changes in this situation in recent years, but Kerala has to go a long way to effectively encourage productive initiatives Although microenterprises do not require such an industrial climate, the initiatives are hard to come by because of the general feeling among the population about investments and their bleak prospects The task of motivating and convincing the members that SEMs would be a source of regular income to improve their standards of living is easier said than done In order to be successful in this task two more things are essential (i) a general improvement in the living conditions of the members after they have joined the group and availed themselves of credit, and (ii) the creation of a feeling that the use of loans mostly for immediate needs cannot render a steady improvement in their living standards and, hence, that they need to open some form of regular income-generating self-employment enterprise The groups also need to provide support services on a sustained basis at every stage, beginning with the start of SEM initiatives

Notes

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1 The WIN Society is a network dedicated to the development and social transformation of women Formed in 1991, the NGO currently operates not only in Kerala but also in other states in India such as Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and in some North-eastern states The broad objectives of WIN Society include (a) to take meaningful initiatives in the areas of gender justice, literacy, adult education, health, environmental and legal awareness and protection, with a particular focus on the poorer sections of the society, (b) the initiation of well-planned programmes for the all-round empowerment of the women, especially of the poorer masses of the Indian women, through skills-development and income-generating programs, (c) the fostering among the women of India, specifically among the poorer women, a meaningful and realistic sense of their own identity, predicament, and possibilities

through a humanising gender education and cultural programmes, (d) networking with women's groups and movements throughout the country for the development of a sense of worldwide women's solidarity, and (e) taking initiatives in research, documentation and publication on issues relating to social justice, environmental and ecological problems, women's and children's issues

2 The WIN Society founded its first SHG in 1997 in its own neighbourhood at Eramalloor in Alappuzha Before this, the WIN Society had only *Mahila Samajams* (Women's Associations) When it realised that it is difficult to motivate women to be active members in such associations, it thought of forming SHGs with the help of other like-minded people and organisations working in the nearby areas NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) and some other NGOs were taking initiatives to organise women's groups under CDS (Community Development Society) in Alappuzha There were also attempts by the *Kuttanad Vikasana Samithi* (Kuttanad Development Committee) in Alappuzha district The WIN Society allied with these banks and agencies and ventured into the area of SHGs and initiated groups

3 In Kerala, there are fourteen districts, sixty-three taluks, 152 rural blocks, and 1,452 villages

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Street Gangs in Guntur: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance and Crime

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Utilising the triangulation approach, this paper attempts to understand the various dimensions of gang menace in Guntur city in Andhra Pradesh It explains and analyses the organisational structure of the gangs – their size, characteristics, culture, activities, and modus operandi It notes that the emergence of the underclass in our cities poses questions that cannot be answered entirely by 'courthouse criminology' or 'surrogate sociology'

[Keywords criminal subculture, Guntur, urban criminal gangs, urban violence, the sociology of deviance and crime]

The emergence of the underclass in Indian cities poses questions that cannot be answered either by 'courthouse criminology' or 'surrogate sociology' [1] Surveys and quantitative studies may be valid on their own terms, but they hardly help us understand what is really happening at the ground level The study on which this paper is based has attempted to understand the various dimensions of the problem of gang menace in Guntur city (in Andhra Pradesh)[2] which has seen a sudden spurt in the activities of nine prominent criminal gangs operating in and around the city The main objectives of the study were (a) to provide a profile of the gangs, (b) to describe their activities and modus operandi, (c) to examine the sources of their strength, support and sustenance, and (d) to reflect on the ways and means to control and contain the problem of gang menace

During the year 2002, there were 250 registered rowdy-sheeters operating in Guntur, of which about 185 came under 'A' category, that is, those involved in murder, rape, extortion of money, burglary, theft, bootlegging, and eviction from properties by using force These rowdy-

sheeters are distributed among nine different gangs operating their specialised activities under a gang leader each In all, 120 gang members and leaders of the nine gangs were interviewed adopting the snowball strategy or 'Chain Referral Technique' (see Dunlap *et al* 1990) In addition, useful and pertinent data were collected by direct observation and by scanning the records available with the local police stations The data so generated through triangulation approach were analysed with the help of qualitative methods suitable for describing everyday life from the point of view of the actors

Profiles of the Gangs

Long back, in his study of gangs in Chicago, F M Thrasher (1936) pointed out that the gang is an informal group and that it is unattached to any regular component of society He called this the characteristic of being 'interstitial', which means that the gang exists among other societal components without being a part of any of them To him, a gang consists of a group of people who meet face-to-face quite often and are integrated into a unit, which is in conflict with society In order to protect itself from the harassment by neighbours or from the attacks by police, the gang so formed, soon closes its ranks, takes a name, becomes conscious of its own identity and retaliates Its identity may also be proclaimed through special insignia and special clothes Naturally these signs, along with words of the group's behaviour and threats, actual or implied, make the local citizens apprehensive One incident of stabbing, rape, assault, vandalism or terrorisation spreads fear throughout the community Hence, a gang is defined as 'an interstitial and integrated group of persons who meet face to face more or less regularly and whose existence and activities as a group are considered an actual or potential threat to the prevailing social order' (Cartwright 1975)

The gang size in Guntur ranges from 10 to 30 members, but it varies from time to time and from situation to situation (see Appendix) The age-range of the gang members varied from 22 to 50 years, with an average of 28 years All the gang members are males, with the exception of 3 or 4 female accomplices associated with them While 85 per cent of these gang members are married living with their families, the rest 15 per cent are either unmarried, widowed or separated Seventy-eight per cent of them are literate, having completed their education ranging from fifth to twelfth standard, the remaining 22 per cent are illiterate While 65 per cent of them belong to the city of Guntur, 25 per cent were drawn from neighbouring villages within the Guntur district and the remaining 10 per cent hailed from different regions of the State of Andhra Pradesh

Seventy-two per cent of the gang members are Hindus, followed by 20 per cent Muslims, and the rest 8 per cent are Christians Seventy-six per cent of these gang members belong to backward castes, 10 per cent to forward castes, and the remaining 14 per cent to Scheduled Castes and Tribes The annual income of the gangs ranges from Rs 3 to 10 lakhs depending upon the number of cases handled by them This is in addition to free ration, liquor, meals and cinema tickets

Composition, Norms, Activities and Culture of the Gangs

Each gang comprises of a leader, core members, peripheral or fringe members and apprentices or associate members The leader is the most experienced, efficient, skilful and resourceful person, with few arrests and convictions He looks after the security and welfare of the members He is the best organiser and planner of operations He is found to be authoritative with willingness to be democratic with the core members He is expected to maintain the rules of probity in the distribution of any gains or loot Even under great pressure, he should not admit, confess or disclose the identity of his gang and fellow members to any agency and the same is the case with other members of the gang He may be still active in the trade or may have stopped active participation

The core members (inner clique) indulge in special types of violence, liaise with criminal justice functionaries, maintain dens, collect money and perform protective duties They have a say in policy formulation and implementation They are the confidents of the leader The leader and the core members constitute the gang brain The peripheral members actively participate in the profession and implement the actions as suggested by the leader and the core members Also, they are the persons who collect information about the rivals, law enforcement authorities and the parties approached for help The apprentices or associate members form the outermost circle of the gang

All the gang members strictly observe the gang norms and keep cordial terms on the vertical and horizontal planes The gang hierarchy is a transitional feature, and status is achieved by the success in one's own role performance However, the pace of mobility on the vertical plane is slow because the gang membership is restricted and the leader remains in his position till his death or desertion or break-up of the gang That is why sometimes the powerful members of a gang breakaway and form their own independent gangs Naturally, in this process, one gang breeds another

Displaying and wearing the symbols of gang membership such as the pattern and colour of the dress, hand signs, tags and head bands, etc is a

way of being encultured into the gang or learning to be a gang member In a sense, exhibiting such external symbols is a way of trying out a gang identity Accordingly, six out of the nine gangs studied have reported that they have adopted such symbols The best known specialised apparel is the 'gang jacket', generally emblazoned with a gang logo Some gangs also use ear rings, T-shirts, scarves, etc as identifying symbols Almost 85 per cent of the gang members studied revealed that they observe this norm especially when they move out or participate in any action entrusted to them either individually or collectively

Such symbolic representations of gang membership fulfil a variety of functions for gang members First, the symbols of gang membership help to identify both rivals and allies, providing a 'perpetual shorthand' by which the threat represented by an individual can be gauged Second, such gang symbols announce the presence of a gang or gang member in the neighbourhood Third, such symbols communicate threats to others Finally, such symbols reinforce cohesiveness, mutual identity and collective consciousness among gang members Through this process, bonds of membership are strengthened and gang activities attain a group context

For greater pecuniary success, to counter social censor and pressures, to compete with adversaries, to meet the challenges of the criminal justice machinery and to earn status, power, security and money in its own system, the need for strong functional sub-system is felt With a distinctive specialist mode of its own, each gang has its specified operational field By and large, the activities or functions of the gangs under study are forced vacating of houses and shops, controlling hill quarry and sand quarry, land grabbing, extraction of money from business/commercial houses, settlement of house/land disputes, hiring assassins/committing murders, arranging hired 'supporters' to political parties, blackmailing and extracting money from administrators/officers, and participating and nurturing factional politics and feuds

The pull factors cited by members for joining the gangs are protection, the prompting of friends/relatives, the desire to make quick money, and the status associated with being a gang member In addition, factors such as unemployment, poverty, family disorganisation, faulty or inadequate socialisation, and caste or political rivalries were cited by our respondents as push factors or abetting forces for their joining the gangs

The gangs under study exhibit a subculture of their own The gangs' subcultural entities can be broadly classified into two types *the criminal subculture*, where the gang is devoted to theft, looting, extortion, murder, bootlegging, etc , and *the conflict subculture*, where the gang and its

members actively pursue violent activities as a method of winning status, power and dominance

Gangs are organised for violence and crime They provide the needed training, weaponry, ideology, motive, discipline and leadership for engaging in violence From this perspective, gang violence can be viewed as the outcome of a group whose formal purpose is to organise violence for instrumental purposes An alternative perspective is that gangs amplify violence, that is, gangs provide a collective process that weakens ties to social institutions and increases interactions with and attachments to individuals already involved in crime A third explanation is that gang membership is selected for crime and violence Individuals who are already prone to violent behaviours with criminal history select each other as compatriots, and since violence is their initial bond, they continue to engage in such behaviour as their group coalesces and grows Whatever it may be, involvement in the gang activities dramatically increased the social isolation of our subjects to a disturbing degree Legitimate social groups and institutions, therefore, distance gang members from their provinces, just as gang members distance themselves from such non-street life activities Thus, gang members and gangs bring danger to their environs and the people around them

Modus Operandi of the Gangs

Of the nine gangs under study, three are *mercenary gangs* known for professional killings for gaining money Since they undertake only rough-and-tough jobs like assaulting, disfiguring, maiming, killing, kidnapping, extorting and destroying the properties of the victims, only tough and hard-core, rigorously trained professional criminals compose these gangs and they never hesitate to use violence in accomplishing their purpose These mercenaries equip themselves according to the target, nature of job and their modus operandi, which they undertake They are generally equipped with unlicensed arms and ammunitions, knives, swords, daggers, and they are mobile, using cars and vans for quick get-away The jobs undertaken by them are conducted in three stages, namely, surveillance, planning, and execution The leader of the gang earmarks the persons to be involved in the operation at different stages of the operation The victim is targeted at multiple points as per his movements so that even if he escapes at one point, he will be victimised at another point

The two *theft and robbery gangs* we studied are well organised, with clear-cut division of labour The gang consists of informers for collection of information, executors to conduct operation and middle agents to

dispose of the stolen property There are various types of thefts committed by these gangs snatching, picking pockets, house-breaking, burglary, vehicle lifting, etc These gangs conduct surveillance for the selection of targets, and their operations are well planned, organised and executed At the time of theft, robbery or dacoity, all members are well equipped with deadly weapons and tools required for the operation These weapons are often used to threaten the victim intentionally to take away the property and they are also used to respond to the resistance offered by the victims as a reflex action

The leaders of the two *illicit liquor gangs* we studied have direct links with the influential local politicians and police officers For the smooth running of their operations, these gangs pay hefty sums to these politicians and police officers An illicit liquor gang is divided into various groups one group organises distillation of liquor, another group supervises the transportation and distribution of illicit liquor to various selling units and franchises, and yet another group looks after the selling Another group of strong men safeguards the business at all levels from the distillation point to the selling units

Finally, there are two gangs in our study which indulge in *kidnapping, extortion, blackmailing and other rowdy activities* Fear provides the basis for extortion, and through using force and intimidation, these criminal gangs extort money on a regular basis The effective persuasion followed by violence, assault, beating, and destruction of property are the initial works of these extortionists, and these induce victims to stay on their line paying a stipulated sum regularly to the extortionists But these gangs restrict their activities to their domain, they neither encroach into another's territory, nor allow others to step inside their territory Kidnapping for ransom is another activity of these gangs, it has the potential for earning more money by using less force They generally kidnap the near and dear ones of businessmen and industrialists who can afford to pay huge ransom for the release of the hostage The kidnappers do not generally take the risk of disclosing their identity, they try to use a third party for transactions or dealings

The network with politicians and police officials help the gangs to run their business smoothly, especially in closing the case histories of the gang members and erasing evidence of the crimes even when they are apprehended by the police Since the whole network involves many persons, the operations will always aim for a high returns Parallel to their illegal enterprises, these gangs also run legitimate business to launder their illegitimate money Improved mode of transport, quicker means of communications and easy method of transfer of money have created favourable conditions for these criminal gangs Use of pagers and

cell phones has become very common The success of these gangs depends upon the efficiency and the ability to carry on their activities without any hitch Each member of the gang has to perform his assigned tasks to the best of his ability If one fails in his assigned operation or deviates from it, he will be punished brutally This terror will induce the members to achieve success in each of their operations High rewards are given for their successful deeds

Gang Members and their Family Life

Only 34 per cent of the gang members studied live with both their parents and 11 per cent live either with their fathers or their mothers, the remaining 55 per cent either live away from their parents or they have no parents Those living alone are older, and have their spouses and children All most all the gang members are living in poor localities with fewer resources Almost 85 per cent have stated that their fathers were neither gang members nor criminals There was no case in which a son had joined his father's gang, but 32 per cent of our respondents informed that they had been encouraged to join the gang by their brothers

Generally, gang members preferred to hide their gang membership from family members As many as 71 per cent reported that, despite their efforts, their families knew about their association with gangs In most cases, their families did not provide any support or encouragement to their gang activities Their parents' disapproval did not prevent the gang members from indulging in gang activities While 60 per cent of the gang members felt that their membership had not affected their families in any way, 78 per cent of their family members could recount, often in considerable detail, the negative consequences of having a gang member in the family While the threat of violence provided more tangible negative results, it also produced symbolic effects About 38 per cent of our members reported that their families had lost respect because of legal troubles stemming from their gang activities Similarly, 33 per cent of them agreed that their sons and daughters or brothers and sisters were badly affected since nobody came forward to marry them As against this, the members of their close kin reported that having a gang member in their family provided advantages to them in terms of safety, security, easy money and other related privileges

Despite all this, we received no reports that such experiences caused gang members to leave their gang or consider moving away from the house to reduce their families' exposure to violence All this highlights the strength of the bonds between the gang and its members which suggests that the gang may be more important to gang members than

their families It is for this reason that all most all the gang members we studied felt that these gangs came to their rescue when their parents could not meet their basic needs due to various reasons

Conclusion

The analysis and findings of this study are in line with R A Cloward and L E Ohlin's theory (see Cloward and Ohlin 1960) The central idea of this theory is that lower-class adolescents join delinquent subcultures not to solve internal, psychological problems of adjustment, as A K Cohen (1955) claims, but in response to external problems of social injustice The delinquent person, to Cloward and Ohlin, is one who blames society or the larger social system rather than himself for his failure For such persons, there is a strong sub-cultural emphasis on self-assertion and on a rebellious independence against authority as the means of attaining masculinity As Cloward and Ohlin (1960) note, delinquent subcultures emerge because of the strain and alienation felt by lower class youths who aspire to the same cultural goals of success as the rest of the society while being confronted by the differential availability of the legitimate means of achieving these successive goals In their words, there is a 'disparity between what lower class youth are led to want and what is actually available to them ' (*ibid* 86) Consequently, they react by adopting illegitimate means of reaching the same goals of economic affluence The economic hardship suffered by generations narrows down the possibilities of action A sense of desperation (Matza 1964) is created amongst them, who find some forms of action (education, work, etc) closed to them, while other forms (apathy, frustration and drugs) are excluded by the subculture as being the very antithesis of manliness

This is what has occurred to the minds of our subjects and experienced by them in Guntur The only alternative in such a situation, and the hallowed in the traditions of the city's slum life, is to respond with violence and crime The Guntur gang member feels that he is being pushed around, that he has no control over the social conditions, which predetermine his future, and yet he is expected to act like a man who is in charge of the situation Some drastic reassurance that he can still make things happen is necessary (*ibid*) That reassurance, our data suggest, is likely to take the form of gang culture in Guntur It is only in this social context that the most disturbed personality can come to the fore, through his prowess in explosive acts of violence, he is able to capture the leadership of the gang Accordingly, two out of the three distinctive types of delinquent subcultures, namely, *the criminal subculture* and *the conflict subculture* are formed and found among the gangs of Guntur in

line with Cloward and Ohlin's theory But, the third type of subculture identified by them, namely, *the retreatist subculture* is not noticed in the gangs operating in the study area The retreatist subculture is a type of gang in which the consumption of drugs is stressed Boys who have become alienated from conventional roles and who have not succeeded in gaining status in either criminal or conflict gangs are the double failures who retreat into drug use

Putting aside the myriad of criticisms levelled against the Chicago-based social ecological school of thought (see Thrasher 1936, Vila 1994), its contribution in understanding that crime was the result of the social organisation maintained and experienced by the people in the inner city areas is to some extent justified in the case of the gangs and gang culture in Guntur It seems that the gang members have so deeply internalised lower-class culture that predominant legitimate institutions have no effect upon their behaviour, which facilitates and fosters crime and delinquency This is reflected well in getting into and staying out of trouble, being a tough guy, outsmarting or conning others, searching for excitement or thrills, considering one's life as being controlled by fate, destiny or luck, and finally being ambivalent about independence – are all areas or issues which command widespread and persistent attention and a high degree of emotional involvement

To sum up, the discordant home life, access to illegitimate modes of living, thriftlessness, stimulating life of the underworld, poor religious control or participation, arrested communication and loose association with the members of the legitimate groups. lingering suspicion of the members of the larger system, pressure of the enforcement agencies and pull of the colleagues combine and leave no choice for these delinquents but lean more towards illegitimate associations where they are accepted, trusted, have success and status

Appendix: Profile of the Gangs Studied

No (1)	Name of the gang (2)	Areas of operation in the city (3)	Member-ship size (4)	Caste composition (5)	Political party affiliation (6)	Nature of the gang activities (7)	No of crimes committed (8)	Sub-cultural identity (9)
1	Karasani Srinivasa Rao's gang (alias) Kasri gang	11,12,13 municipal wards	About 25	Single caste	Congress	Extortion of money, kidnapping, blackmailing, etc	About 25	Mostly conflict
2	Chintala Srinivasa Rao's gang (alias) Chisu gang	Ward 19 and some periphery areas of the city	About 15	Multi-caste	Basically anti-left but supports the party in power	Assaulting, murdering	About 20	Mostly criminal
3	Dyala Srinivasa Rao's gang (alias) Nallakunta gang	Wards 40,41 and 46	25-30	Multi-caste	Party in power	Extortion of money from chit fund agencies, real estate, and business houses, and kidnapping	15-18	Conflict as well as criminal
4	Pasupuleti Siva Sankar's gang (alias) Siva gang (alias) Dirty Dozen	Wards 26, 27, 28	10-12	Single caste	No affiliation	Mostly thefts, robbery and burglary	About 15	Mostly criminal
5	Devarasetti Ravi gang (alias) Devra gang	Wards 45 and 47	About 15	Single caste	CPI and CPI (M)	Mainly boot-legging, distillation gambling, etc	About 20	Mostly criminal

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
6	Adaka Rattalu gang (alias) Adara gang	Wards 37 and 38	20-22	Multi-caste	Has connections with all parties	Mafia, mercenary gang murders, extortion, etc	About 12	Mostly criminal
7	Bonabouna Srinivasa Rao gang (alias) Cheppula Sreenu gang	Wards 14 and 15	About 15	Single caste	Congress	Mercenary gang murders, assaults, kidnapping, etc	About 15	Criminal
8	Avula Rambabu's gang (alias) Rambabu gang	Wards 21, 22 and 23 and surrounding villages	About 20	Single caste	No political affiliation	House breaking, looting, assaulting, etc	About 30	Mostly criminal
9	Kalyanam Satish gang (alias) Satyam's gang	City suburbs and periphery localities	25-30	Multi-caste	No political affiliation	Gambling, prostitution, bootlegging, etc	About 15	Mostly criminal

Notes

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1 'Courthouse criminology' refers to the analysis of official statistics and data generated by surveys of law-enforcement or other public sources or agencies Gangs are counted and crime statistics tabulated, but gang members are not interviewed or described by direct observation 'Surrogate sociology' uses intermediaries to identify gang members and allows the researcher to gain temporary and limited access to gang land (Hagedorn 1990 247)

2 Guntur is the Head Quarters of Guntur District in Andhra Pradesh The city acquired the status of a Municipal Corporation in 1994, and is a commercial and trade centre According to the 2001 Census, the city had a population of 514,661 distributed over 50 municipal wards in an area of 45 79 sq km

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DISCUSSION

The Poser

Universalising and Indigenising Social Knowledge: Breaking the Western Hegemony

Namrata Gupta

Academic sociology shares a dilemma similar to academic engineering whether to produce usable and useful knowledge, or to produce knowledge for the sake of knowledge However, conceptual studies cannot be pursued without an understanding of the social problems Similarly, micro-studies in sociology would entail application of the broader concepts and theories Both 'basic and applied research provides the foundation on which the edifice of policies and social action are erected' (Mukherji 2005 321) In this sense, 'universalisation' of social science is the process of generating generalisations for wider theoretical and practical application

The process of universalising sociology is not in contradiction to its 'indigenisation' Sociological concepts, irrespective of the place of their origin, have universal application, and knowledge pool is incomplete without contribution of different regions and nations Consistent with the concept of 'indigenisation', is the understanding of the social reality in its own socio-cultural context, leading to universalising social sciences through evolution and modification of conceptual frameworks

The goal of universalising implies the latent need of publishing in internationally visible journals, without which it is impossible to be understood and to contribute meaningfully to the existing sociological paradigms To engage with the western sociologists in a dialogue that

truly universalises the discipline so that it sheds its 'Eurocentric' bias, and, to make our research visible, we need to publish at the same forum as the westerners However, such publications appear to be fraught with problems unique to a non-westerner, and especially to an Indian This is partly because of the hegemony of the western thought A state of moral and intellectual leadership is maintained by the West in the social sciences because of their domination of a network of the best research journals, research institutes and research paradigms This domination is cemented by a lack of visibility of research being conducted in the non-western countries The section below demonstrates how some of the issues involved in publishing in international journals reflect this hegemony

Problems in Publishing

Indians face certain problems in publishing in international journals that may not be faced by a western author My examples are derived from the referee reports received in the course of publishing my research[1] (though limited) on gender in science and engineering in the academic institutes, in international journals Although receptive to data from India and welcoming Indian contributions, the reviews reflect the hegemony of western knowledge and thought process The problems stated here could be a reflection of the author's own inadequacies, but they could be generic as well

Demonstration of knowledge of western literature: For the subject of women in science, the papers require a thorough review of the western literature on the subject At times, the western authors have to be mentioned more to demonstrate our knowledge of the subject rather than to advance the argument of the paper It was quite noticeable from some of the reviews that though the Indian literature on the subject was desirable, the experts had no knowledge about it Our research is not visible abroad, though our findings and paradigms may be unique This hegemony of western knowledge needs to be broken through greater efforts at promoting greater accessibility of our findings This could, perhaps, partly be achieved through online publication of our journals

Advancing theory mostly developed in the West: To be published in a journal, merely descriptive papers are not acceptable They need to be analytical and to advance the specialism by theorising However, western perspectives dominate most of the areas of knowledge This has led to the Indian sociologists becoming victims of 'academic globalisation' (Sharma 2000 94), and to the consequent fears of Indian sociology being divorced from reality (Jha 2005 401)

However, merely an application of the western paradigm by fitting the Indian data into the western perspectives is puerile For an advancement of the discipline Indian perspectives need to be developed and raised to a level where they can either compete with the existing western ones or modify them In that sense, any Indian study becomes a comparative study A comparison of the Indian situation with the western becomes imperative for an argument with the western paradigms If we do not demonstrate enough competence to do so, we might indeed lose out to those researching on India abroad One of the most suitable frameworks that I have been able to locate to describe the situation of women in India is that of 'patrifocality' (Mukhodadhyay and Seymour 1994) developed by the social scientists from the west 'Patrifocality' distinguishes the Indian reality from the western 'patriarchy' in a succinct and lucent manner

The western ignorance of the Indian society: Every paper that is published internationally requires a broad overview of the Indian socio-cultural context before beginning with the specific context of the problem being studied In case of gender in science, it was essential to include the traditional, historical background of women's status in Indian society, the status of women's education, the status of women's education in science, of women in science occupations, relation between colonial science and the present, which forms a longer backdrop to the study than that required by a westerner when describing a similar situation in the west or than that required by us for an Indian journal.

The reviewers, at times, find it hard to understand the terminology and the procedures used in India For instance, in the study on women doctoral scholars in science and engineering, reviewers' remarks included, 'What is the difference between an advisor and a guide? How is either related to the British supervisor, and the American supervisor and panel chair?' 'What is a peon?' 'What is a 'pilot-study'? Is it a pre-test or exploratory test?' 'Clearer explanations of Indian procedures are needed' Also, some of the nuances involved in the role expectations of women are not understood For instance, 'Why can't women scholars buy the clerical staff off with gifts like men do?' asked a reviewer

Counter-Hegemony

There are a few examples of frameworks from India and other non-western countries that have helped to broaden the existing 'west-centric' knowledge For instance, 'postcolonial theory' has challenged 'the assumption that western knowledge is objective, authoritative and universally applicable' (Anderson 2002 646) Similarly, 'subaltern' group of Indian historians have helped in going beyond the post-structuralist

tendency to find power diffused in 'modernity', or 'western discourse' (Cooper 1994 1517) There is ample scope to develop new frameworks for ' there are no concepts that are not plural, that all universals are partial, and that there exists a plurality of universals' (Wallerstein 1999 22)

Problem of Regional Sociology

Although regionalisation of sociology (oriented towards a region and in the regional language) is seen to be an 'inevitable process', sociological rigour is sacrificed, which is mainly due to 'our inability to use English as a library language' (Shah 2000) In fact, all higher education (from the undergraduate studies onwards) needs to be in English This has seldom been disputed for the science and engineering studies In the social sciences, the advantage of using a regional language to understand the rich cultural landscape of a region is offset by the disadvantages inherent in the poor translations and inaccessibility to a rich sociological literature in English, all of which, may never be translated As scientists, sociologists within India and around the world need to communicate with other scholars in the language (in the use of terminology, concepts and paradigms) that is universally understood It is difficult to imagine conferences, journals, books and Internet information, all being translated in different regional languages Without the sociological literature at our disposal, it is difficult to grasp the conceptual tools required to understand our own intra and inter regional diversities Also, with linguistic diversity of sociological research, the accessibility of that research to other parts within India would require translation

Conclusion

A two-pronged strategy to universalise social science is required one, to strengthen regional sociology so as to effectively survey the grass-root problems and to allow an inflow of fresh ideas, second, to be more vocal about our findings in the international forum This would entail the use of indigenous social studies to theorise in broader terms This task requires the use of English, which may also enable us to solve the problem of connecting regional sociology to pan-Indian and the latter to international sociology

Notes

1 Review reports of the following papers form the basis of this article Namrata Gupta and Arun K Sharma (2002) 'Women academic scientists in India', *Social studies of science,* 32 (6) 901-15, Namrata Gupta and Arun K Sharma (2003) 'Gender

inequality in work environment at institutes of higher learning in science and technology in India', *Work, employment and society*, 17 (4) 597-616, and Namrata Gupta 'Indian women in doctoral education in science and engineering A study of informal milieu at the reputed Indian Institutes of Technology', *Science, technology and human values* (tentatively accepted)

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The Responses

Let Sociology be Sociology

Rajesh Gill

The urge among Indian sociologists for indigenising sociology without compromising its universalisation is almost half a century old now Brilliant expositions on the issue have come from eminent sociologists including D P Mukerji, S C Dube, Louis Dumont and D F Pocock, Yogendra Singh, T K Oommen, P N Mukherji and others, highlighting the challenges before contemporary Indian sociology Let me take up the arguments put forth by Namrata Gupta one by one

1. Universalisation and indigenisation of sociology

- Given the debunking of meta narratives in the shape of grand theories, is it adequate to aspire for universalising sociology? While Gupta, following P N Mukherji (2005), puts up a case for moving from indigenised to universalised sociology, the very issues demanding research priority are extremely different in western and non-western societies For example, poverty, illiteracy and corruption as they exist in the historical cultural context in the non-western countries have no parallel in western societies today and hence can neither find a centrality among the latter, nor can these be conceptualised in a similar fashion in the two situations In the words of Yogendra Singh ' most of these theoretical formulations have come from the American social science and conform to a model of society based on plenty rather than poverty, exchange rather than exploitation, consensus rather than conflict' (1986 62-63)
- While I do appreciate the ultimate goal of sociological research as envisaged at the time of its birth, that is, to develop theoretical frameworks that are universally applicable, we need to be clear as to what we mean by universalisation of sociology? Gupta writes 'To engage with the western sociologists in a dialogue that truly universalises the discipline ' Are not we committing the same mistake of equalising 'universal' with the 'western', thus granting the western a paramount importance once again?
- Let us also be clear on what we mean by 'indigenisation' in whose name a lot of ghettoisation in sociology has already occurred, with very narrow cleavages having emerged in the process, for example, dalit's sociology, women's sociology and so on Very often one finds these areas segregated and insulated not merely in published literature, but even in dialogic situations such as seminars and conferences At times these are so regionalised that one wonders how these could be ever universalised in absence of a dialogue even within Indian sociologists

2. Universalising sociology by publishing in international journals

Gupta writes 'the goal of universalising implies the latent need of publishing in internationally visible journals ' In response to this argument, I would like to submit the following

- Before going into the question of publishing in internationally visible journals, it is necessary to introspect whether the indigenised sociological literature has a theoretical orientation, capable of offering significant inputs towards a universalising goal
- While I agree that getting published in the international journals involves much more than mere scholarship, is the same not happening within our own country? Can any body from a small-town institution think of getting his manuscript (despite its intellectual input) published by a top publisher of the country?

3. Indian sociology is invisible at international platform/question of western hegemony

- I do not agree that literature from non-western regions does not get noticed at the international level To take an example from gender studies, feminist literature in internationally visible writings today has a large representation of field-based studies from non-western countries like Japan, Indonesia, Bosnia, Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka The question is, have we been able to produce 'actual' field-based studies offering alternative explanations to the existing theoretical paradigms? Or is it that our studies tend to be so soaked in local idioms that these fail to find comparability outside their own limited vicinity?
- We shall seriously have to think as to whether we are aspiring to universalise the indigenised sociology or just struggling to be making Indian sociology acceptable to the guardians of western sociology (the two goals are extremely different)
- It is not fair to blame western sociology for the ignorance about Indian society The question is have we been able to present our understanding of Indian society in a theoretically coherent form to the west? Why do we still long for getting published only in western journals (also called international journals)? Have we been able to get out of the framework of 'the captive mind' (Alatas 1974)?
- We must remember that the best of Indian sociology was produced and recognised the world over at a time when there were few professional societies, funding agencies, conferences, communication networks, etc – the kind we have today What is important is that sociologists who then earned a name had entered into an academic dialogue with the existing western

frameworks by offering alternative indigenously developed conceptualisations on the basis of extensive field work, for example, M N Srinivas, S C Dube, André Béteille and the like Can there be any authentic indigenised sociology manufactured across computers totally oblivious of the ground reality that can only be captured through vernacular local idioms and methodologies?

- Hegemony of western sociology persists because there are buyers (Oommen 1986 256) Our fascination with western concepts, theories, journals and conferences persists at the cost of indigenised sociology Is not it a fact that our knowledge about foreign journals and conferences is much better than what is happening in our own country?

4. Regionalising and universalising sociology: The only solution

- The idea of regionalised sociology does not seem to be appealing to me for the simple reason that such an exercise is likely to parochialise sociology to a great extent Instead, what can pay is a consistent effort by sociologists in India (or anywhere else) to (a) address the issues that are crying for investigation instead of buying issues from the western sociology, (b) develop theoretical explanations of these issues with the help of existing theoretical frameworks (western or non-western), and (c) make substantive contribution to theoretical knowledge in the discipline by translating the indigenised idioms into internationally communicable sociological conceptualisations
- While we get panicky when not given space in western journals, why are we not disturbed by the fact that the western sociologists are not very keen to get space in Indian or non-western journals? One way to enhance a dialogue at the international level could be to share the intellectual space in non-western journals with western sociologists to a greater extent and take a lead Why can not our journals be as sought after as those being published from the West?
- I have my reservations on the project of universalisation of indigenised sociology for the simple reason that the subject matter of sociology is too diverse, while it may be possible to universalise some areas in indigenised sociology, it may not be possible to do so in others Let us be very clear about our goals, the need for indigenising and contextualising sociology has emerged out of an increasing realisation about the culture

specificity, historicity and peculiarity of social reality, the explanation of which may not always be capable of getting universalised

5. There can be no genuine research without ethics

While we are aspiring to achieve international acclaim for the research being conducted by us in our country, we are totally oblivious of the question whether or not this research is genuine The foremost question is what is the driving force behind most sociological research? Is it curiosity or academic lust for knowledge? The most important reasons for most of the research being undertaken are (a) enhancing one's bio-data (with emphasis on numbers and with an utter disregard for quality), (b) self-promotion, and (c) networking The methods normally used to get published include (a) stealing the unpublished work of students without their knowledge, (b) stealing the ideas and data from the articles received for scrutiny, and (c) using data built by various organisations, without bothering about their authenticity and reliability Genuine research will remain an illusion unless our research enfolds these ethical questions

To conclude, the discipline of sociology in India first needs an overhauling – the quality of teaching, the quality of students and the literature on which they depend, and the quality of sociological research and theorising have to improve These issues are highlighted brilliantly by N Jayaram (1998) It is a pity that sociologists, who claim to have accomplished enormous work on Indian caste system, have hardly been considered worth consultation in the ongoing crisis of caste identification on reservation issue in our own country Let us not keep looking at the western sociologists for an ear, we need to first learn to enjoy listening to fellow sociologists in our own region and enter into a dialogue with them, before turning towards our colleagues in the west for an audience

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Challenging Western Paradigm on Social Knowledge: Need for Genuine Indigenous Lenses

B.B. Mohanty

Namrata Gupta's note, 'Universalising and Indigenising Social Knowledge', indicating western hegemony over Indian sociology and possible ways to challenge it is most welcome I am in broad agreement with her that western paradigms continue to dominate social sciences of non-western countries and they need to be contested However, I have problems with the manner she has illustrated western hegemony and the suggestions she makes to universalise indigenous knowledge

True, social science theories in the West are constructed from a Euro-American perspective Western social knowledge cannot be divorced from ethnocentrism, since it produces and reinforces ethnocentrism (Stanfield 1985 396) The social scientists from this part of the world generalise the application of their conceptual schemes, methodological techniques drawn from the experiences of a small part of the humanity, overlooking the ethno-cultural diversity and scholarship produced in non-western societies As Alvin Gouldner (1975 77) says, 'professional courtesy stifles intellectual curiosity, the teeth of piety bite the tongue of truth'

Criticism against the dominance of western knowledge is not something new For decades they are under criticism by non-western as well as western scholars (see Pathy 1976, Stanfield 1985, Amin 1989) The post-colonial theories protested the Euro-American paradigm and proposed alternative models for non-western societies As a result, the western paradigm which was undisputedly considered universal is now being questioned in certain areas of inquiry For example, the

modernisation theory which was dominating the development discourse for decades gradually loses its universality with the emergence of alternative theories of development It is rightly argued that a scientific discipline begins with the setting up of a paradigm that provides a basic focus of orientation (Kuhn 1962) In due course, new paradigm emerges offering new methods The destruction of old paradigm must await the birth of new paradigm, and the two activities must occur simultaneously (Friedrich 1970)

Indian sociology came into being when the British raj realised that the knowledge on Indian socio-cultural life is essential for its smooth administration Sociologists were trained to study social organisation and practices, particularly the caste system The sociological literature in India during this period was mostly descriptive and ethnographical D P Mukherji, who was critical of colonial sociology, lamented, 'It pains me to observe that how our Indian scholars succumb to the lure of modern "scientific" techniques imported from outside it seems that we have no terms to offer, no ground to stand upon' (quoted in Pathy 1976 27?)

In the post-colonial phase, under the influence of American sociology a variety of concepts (integration, equilibrium, adaptation, etc) and theories (functional theory, balance theory, reference group theory) dominated the sociological discourse Caste continued to be the main area of sociological inquiry Although recently Indian sociologists broadened their area of study, whatever indigenous concepts or theories emerged so far are mainly related to caste, excepting some innovations in the study of social movements

In order to question the west-centric perspectives we need to come up with new concepts and theories that follow abstractions of the kind warranted both by scientific methods and proper pursuit of knowledge It is imperative to broaden the horizon of our sociological inquiry by undertaking macro studies on core sociological issues with innovative quantitative as well as qualitative techniques instead of only micro-level descriptive/narrative studies that focus only on peripheral issues having little bearing on majority of population Besides, to make our research more substantive we need to study our society in comparative perspectives across regions and societies André Béteille rightly reminds 'We can not evade comparisons So long as students of society in France studied only French society, or in Germany only German society, and in India only Indian society, they were not yet sociologists They became sociologists only when they began to study systematically their own society as well as other societies by bringing them on the same plane of inquiry and investigation' (International Sociological Association e-bulletin 2005) Only concepts and theories born of such genuine pursuits

are likely to be relevant for the West, just as western knowledge is considered to be relevant beyond the West (Mukherji 2005 319)

Putting aside a theoretical or methodological model just because it is produced in the West is unscientific If we do so, it would ultimately amount to closing off rather than opening up scientific inquiry Béteille says somewhere that any perspective, western or non-western, to be universally valid need to draw on sociological concepts, methods and theories created by the western scholars (see Mukherji, 2005 320)

Publication of articles in online Indian journals/western journals may make research visible, if it is founded on original methodological or theoretical frame Unless we produce high quality research output providing new concepts, theories and methods, we will not be able to engage with western scholars, no matter where we publish We must not lose sight of the fact that the contributions of Radha Kamal Mukherji, Irawati Karve and many others differed from western perspectives, yet are appreciated by western scholars It is an oversimplified generalisation to argue, based on some occasional examples, that western scholars are ignorant of Indian society, culture and practices The emphasis of western journals on analytical and theoretical rigour does not necessarily imply that Indians are expected to fit their analysis to western paradigms without logical relevance

To put it bluntly and succinctly, we are not opposed to science but to the dominance of only one 'ethnoscience' The only way to challenge this dominance and make us visible is not by discarding western knowledge, but by demonstrating its inapplicability in our context through discovery of an alternative knowledge base Regionalisation of sociology or becoming vocal internationally is desirable but does not make a complete proposition to universalise Indian sociology

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Old Issues and New Global Contexts

Maitrayee Chaudhuri

Namrata Gupta raises many issues that are central to the practice of sociology in our part of the world Some of these issues she elaborates upon, some she simply touches upon, but pushes no further An important instance of the latter emerges in her very first sentence on the dilemma faced by sociologists between 'knowledge for knowledge sake' as against 'knowledge for use' This dichotomy seems to suggest, maybe quite inadvertently, that 'the knowledge for knowledge sake' is necessarily irrelevant, disengaged from society and a rather selfish pursuit for self-absorbed intellectuals But as we all know, no knowledge is context- or politics-innocent, least of all 'useful' knowledge The sociologist who collects data to map links between micro-credit and 'women's empowerment' does produce 'useful knowledge' So does the sociologist who questions the very project of micro-credit as the answer to poverty alleviation, or the one who has a different notion of 'women's empowerment also produces 'useful knowledge' Sociology helps us ask 'knowledge for whom' and for 'useful for what' To that extent the critical/interrogative part of sociology, or social science, for that matter, is not just 'useful' but an imperative must for a modern democratic society While this is not the central point in Gupta's piece, I begin here because the rhetoric of 'useful' and 'pragmatic' knowledge is the dominant ideology of our times And we need to examine the term 'useful' carefully

In this context, Gupta's note is particularly welcome for it foregrounds theoretical questions This is important because, in much of the developing world, social problems are of an order so immense that it seems ridiculous for academics to involve themselves with theoretical disputes and scholarly niceties when there are just one too many burning issues crying to be addressed The dominant trend today is towards a vision that centre-stages the problem-solving task of social sciences This, in turn, suggests that 'social problems' are entities out there that

require social scientists much like the plumber attending a leaking tap to fix it The tricky and most challenging part of social sciences is that what are termed 'social problems' are not self- evident empirical objects They have to be defined and understood as such For instance increase in 'dowry deaths', divorces, farmers' suicides, child labour, poverty are all issues that are of concern to public policy And yet there are very distinct explanations of them premised on different sets of assumptions Theory helps in making explicit the taken-for-granted, theory helps imagining different worlds

Gupta's quest for a universal theory, however, does not touch upon these diverse modes of doing theory Her model of theory and concept-building seems based on a particular way of collapsing theory-building to developing generalisations Her sense of 'universalisation' of social science is the process of generating generalisations for wider theoretical and practical application She argues that for

> an advancement of the discipline Indian perspectives need to be developed and raised to a level where they can either compete with the existing western ones or modify them In that sense, any Indian study becomes a comparative study A comparison of the Indian situation with the western becomes imperative for an argument with the western paradigms If we do not demonstrate enough competence to do so, we might indeed lose out to those researching on India abroad

At one level, there is nothing to quarrel about with this Nor with Gupta's point that western scholars often reveal abysmal ignorance of eastern societies

However, what is problematic is that whether the root problem of reaching the end route to 'universality' is only that it has been so far premised on studies based on the west, or that it can also be built on studies done on the non-west What was Orientalism all about? But Gupta's goal of universalising stops short of this She feels that by engaging with the western sociologists in a dialogue, the discipline will truly universalise The discipline will thereby shed its 'Eurocentric' bias And yet at the same time she cites Immanuel Wallerstein to state that ' there are no concepts that are not plural, that all universals are partial, and that there exists a plurality of universals' There appears to be a bit of theoretical cross-connection here I think both Gupta's central presumption of universalisation and Wallerstein's quite distinct takes are worth further pursuing in Indian sociology It is no accident that a debate of this kind ensues in the *Sociological Bulletin* Sociology in India has over the years engaged with such questions (Singh 1973 and 1986, Mukherji and Oommen 1988, Chaudhuri 2003, Oommen 2007) The

entire debate 'for a sociology of India' initiated and carried over in *Contributions to Indian Sociology* raised fundamental theoretical and methodological questions To an extent some of the issues remain the same But they have also changed Simply put, we in India are both more 'visible' and more 'useful' in the world than we were before We need to look at the implications of this for sociology in India

Gupta stresses a great deal on the need of publishing in internationally visible journals, without which it is impossible to be understood and to contribute meaningfully to the existing sociological paradigms Given the extant hegemony of western social science, both intellectually and institutionally, Gupta outlines the hazards of seeking publication in western journals In other words the argument that Gupta clearly puts forward is that if we were to engage with western scholars, the onus rests on us We need to explain They do not This is not so different from our face-to-face encounters with westerners either We have to explain what we eat and how we eat We are expected to know how they eat and what they eat Not knowing their way is a social embarrassment Not knowing ours is natural But times have changed Globalised big business needs to know our ways in order to do business here Ad makers know this Management gurus know this Does this alter the quest for universality in sociology? In a way it does What western hegemony in concept-formation and publishing industry means also changes A ready reckoner of the growth of publishing industry in India will tell part of the story We in a way have become more useful than before Even our regional sociology has Does that alter the matter of hegemony? I think it does Globalisation throws up not just new topics for research but alters the objects of enquiry Classes and nations get reconfigured with deep implications for the practice of sociology in India, for theory and concept building

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Plea for an Open, Accommodative Syllabus in Sociology

Dalia Chakrabarti

I appreciate Namrata Gupta for her understanding of the futility of drawing artificial lines between pure and applied sociology and between universal and indigenous social knowledge The inherently applied nature of the discipline of sociology, with its focus on understanding, evaluating and subsequently reconstructing relations in its myriad forms, both at macro/general/global as well as micro/particular/local levels explains this futility Without the interpenetration of universal and indigenous, a truly global sociological knowledge, emanating from the interplay between abstract theory and concrete empirical research, becomes impossible

I agree with Gupta's strategies to get over 'the captive mind' syndrome (Alatas 1972 11-12) [1] But keeping in mind that knowledge production and transmission are always related to each other, I feel that the reframing of the existing sociology syllabi at the college- and university-level teaching in India is equally important to make our would-be researchers capable of undertaking works of international standard The fact that sociology has often been considered here a 'soft' discipline creates a vicious cycle First it attracts students of low intellectual calibre or with lack of seriousness to the subject, then provides the teachers with a justification for the dilution of the rigour of pedagogical tools like syllabi and pedagogic practices like teaching or evaluation, and finally thereby reinforces the popular perception about the discipline In India, the students of sociology must be trained initially to be critically engaged with their own societies at micro-level of everyday experience At the next level, they must perceive it as part of the modern Indian society, and finally must be able to relate to the modern world society, finding at each level many similarities as well as dissimilarities To facilitate this cognitive journey we may follow Avijit Pathak's call for taking an alternative perspective on modernity – a soft or humble modernity – questioning the 'cognitive certainty' inherent in Eurocentric notion of the same (2004 35) A proper balancing of universal and unique societal features in the sociology syllabus, and a focus on contemporary problems, new trends and developments impart among the students the skill to carry out comparative and historical

studies or, borrowing the words of C Wright Mills, the skill to visualise the linkage between history and biography

Taking the example of Calcutta University undergraduate Sociology honours syllabus since the early 1980s (that is, since its inception at the undergraduate honours level), I find it rather incomplete in this regard Among the core courses in the successive syllabi only two are India-specific (one on Indian society and social issues, and the other on Indian sociological thinkers) The rest is either explicitly western, like western sociological thought or implicitly so, like courses on general sociology, sociological theory or research methodology – all of which primarily contain western formulations These courses need to be contextualised historically and focused more in terms of certain common and significant issues, to enable students to draw meaningful linkages and apply them in a similar context in India today Likewise, a student of research methodology should be sensitised to understand the value of folk tales and local histories as sociological data (*ibid* 43-44) A national consensus emerged way back in the 1970s through the regional workshops conducted by the University Grants Commission that the cognitive contents of the course must be grounded into the Indian concrete reality and its history But this task has been primarily left to the capability of the course teachers And, in the contemporary Indian undergraduate learning context, which is characterised mostly by instrumental ethos, that is, getting degree as the sole objective of teaching-learning (Rodrigues 2007), this task has rarely been accomplished

Shifting our focus on the course exclusively on Indian society, we can surely locate a departure from (a) the textual view of India in a timeless perspective of its tradition, (b) an administrator's perspective, looking at Indian reality through censuses, settlement reports and surveys, treating it as a system of discrete entities that could be 'scientifically' classified for analysis and control, (c) a tradition of village economic studies with focus upon rural social structure, and (d) an anthropological approach studying institutions in India from a comparative holistic point of view (Singh 1988 41) The underlying purpose of all such colonial ethnocentric perspectives was to civilise India following the progressive model of the West True, in the syllabus under consideration, items like 'new social movements', a noticeable innovation by the proponents of subaltern studies (a non-western formulation), have found place However, the undue weightage on the persistence and change of caste system and Hindu society, family and kinship proves a Brahmanical bias as well as a failure to get over the colonial ethnocentric binary between the traditional religious India and the modern secular west This might be one possible reason behind the

very delayed inclusion (in the 1990s only) of multiple structures of domination and resultant struggles by the marginalised in modern India, like the dalit movement, movement of ethnic minorities, women's movement, ecological movement, etc in the syllabus Same is true for other Indian universities too (Ilaiah 1998, Pandian 2002, Nigam 2005, Patel 2005, Rodrigues 2007)

However, unlike other Indian Universities, Calcutta University has been long offering a course on Indian sociological thinkers This is appreciable, as all the pioneers of Indian Sociology emphasised the need for indigenisation of Indian Sociology by postulating a dynamic historical perspective on society, though recognising the worth of a comparative framework They initiated the trend of ethnosociology, that is, interpreting Indian reality with indigenous concepts like *purush*, *samajdharma*, etc But one serious lacuna in the current undergraduate syllabus is the total absence of a regional orientation All the previous syllabi contained a few items specific to West Bengal like, land reforms in West Bengal or panchayat in West Bengal, but the 2002 revision (the latest one) focuses entirely on pan-Indian issues, acknowledging though the diversity and variations of Indian society

Gupta raises the issue of the western hegemony, which creates different types of obstructions for the non-western sociological works to be internationally visible Just like western domination in the globalised world, in our country we may identify an age-old domination of Brahminical/patriarchal epistemology The same is true about Marxist Sociology and once popular Soviet studies of Asian and African societies [2] In these, there was an equally closed class framework as the only valid clue about the nature of these societies The works of A R Desai, for example, illustrate this The recent acknowledgement of the significance of caste in the social and political dynamics in India by the communist parties indirectly points to another kind of hegemonic knowledge apart from the hegemony of western liberal sociology we have been talking about

Notes

1 Syed Hussein Alatas, the Malaysian sociologist, conceptualises this syndrome as 'the product of higher institutions of learning, either at home or abroad, whose way of thinking is dominated by western thought in an imitative and uncritical manner', it is 'uncreative and incapable of raising original problems', 'incapable of devising analytical method independent of current stereotypes', 'incapable of separating the particular from the universal in science and thereby properly adapting the universally valid corpus of scientific knowledge to the particular local situation', 'fragmented in outlook', 'alienated from the major issues of sociology', 'alienated from its own national tradition, if it exists, in the field of intellectual pursuit', 'is unconscious of its

own captivity and the conditioning factors making it what it is', 'is not amenable to an adequate quantitative analysis but it can be studied by empirical observation', 'and it 'is a result of western dominance over the rest of the world' (1974 691-700)

2 During the 1980s, in the Calcutta University undergraduate sociology syllabus, there was a heavy emphasis on Marxist sociology, which was completely in tune with the ideological position of the ruling left alliance in the state Left Front's recent inclination towards market-responsive 'bourgeois' development, leaving behind the orthodox Marxist line of socialist development, explains, to a great extent, the liberal sociological orientation of the current syllabus

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BOOK REVIEWS

A.M. Shah (ed.): *The grassroots of democracy Field studies in Indian elections* (Conceived by M N Srinivas and A M Shah) Delhi Permanent Black, 2007, xiv + 379 pp , Rs 695 (hb) ISBN 81-7824-180-3

This volume is a collection of eighteen essays based on the study of elections to the legislative assemblies (in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh) and Parliament (in Delhi, Gujarat, Manipur, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh) in 1967 and 1971 respectively Part I of the book presents the studies of the general elections of 1967 and the studies of the parliamentary elections of 1971 are put under Part II

The study of elections has been generally seen as a concern of the political scientists They generally rely on the data collected through questionnaires, statistics supplied by the Election Commission, and newspaper reports The theoretical assumption behind such studies is that a voter's decision to vote for a candidate is a rational political decision based on political considerations which are defined by the policies and programmes of political parties putting up their candidates Such studies fail to give any idea of the influence of local politics on the electoral behaviour of small communities

The studies included in this volume negate such an assumption and bring out the influence of primordial loyalties such as caste, kinship, religion, tribe, clan, etc on electoral behaviour Primordial loyalties in varying combinations affect the electoral behaviour of the voters The role played by these loyalties could be better understood by applying the techniques of anthropology in data collection instead of depending upon secondary sources of data or generating data with the help of questionnaires Imtiaz Ahmad, in his study of the Rudauli assembly constituency of Uttar Pradesh, brings out the interplay of these loyalties Religious loyalties become important where the candidates belonged to different religions But internal cleavages come to the fore where the candidates

belonged to the same religion B S Baviskar highlights the role of factions in the electoral behaviour of voters Factions act as power groups, rival factions struggle to gain control over political power He argues that the strength of factional loyalties showed the weakness of the organisation of political parties

The influence of caste on the electoral behaviour depends upon the situation and varies from one constituency to the other Anand Chakravarti does not find caste playing an important role in elections He could not establish any definite link between dominant caste and voting behaviour on the basis of the data collected from the village studied by him He found that the voter behaviour was influenced by loyalties to particular leaders in the constituency in 1967 assembly elections But these loyalties did not matter much in the 1971 parlia-mentary elections in the same village This time the voters responded to the electoral appeals of a political party However, Chakravarti does not view this as a sign of political maturity On the other hand, R Jayaraman's study shows that the traditional village and kinship loyalties like caste, kinship, and religion played a definite role in the election process Loyalties to political parties are not static Jayaraman found that the issues and patterns of alignment in local elections were different from those in general elections

Money and other economic considerations also play a significant role while deciding about a particulai candidate Studies conducted by Khadija A Gupta and E A Ramaswamy indicated the role of money besides caste and regional loyalties respectively R D Sanwal and Sushila Sanwal found that ideology of the party was of no great consequence as compared to the caste and regional loyalties Money also played an important role Women voters went along with the head of the household in voting for a particular candidate Weakening of the political power of the dominant caste was found by M N Panini in his study The traditional patron-client relationships in the village were giving way to new relations of friendship, in the political sphere, cutting across caste lines with the emergence of regional elites These ties resulted in cross-cutting allegiances among conflict groups within the village which affected the pattern of political alignments Madhu S Mishra found that factionalism and breaking up of traditional jajmani relationships upset the grip of the dominant caste over the voters in the village The study conducted by L S Vishwanath showed that local loyalties and local issues played an important role in influencing voter behaviour

Yogendra Yadav, in his Epilogue, highlights the value of the studies selected in this volume Bringing out the significance of the elections of 1967 and 1971 in Indian politics, the studies have been able to capture

the transition from the elite-dominated politics to mass politics Various studies included in the volume bring to focus the changing nature of political mobilisation and campaigning during the elections The studies using the social anthropological methodology have brought out the nature of social cleavages operating in electoral politics Yadav suggests a dialogue amongst various methodological approaches to the study of elections

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Badri Narayan: *Women heroes and dalit assertion in North India (Cultural subordination and the dalit challenge,* Volume 5*)* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2006, 186 pp , Rs 295 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3537-1

This book explores the cultural repression of dalits who have been given the lowest rank in the caste hierarchy and the ways in which they have overcome it in North India Badri Narayan begins with the statement, 'Very often myths are more influential than reality, and very often myths give meaning to reality' To this, he has built his argument that, sometimes, or often, the historical memories and images seem so close to the reality that they can be used by different communities to build their present by glorifying the past Similarly, the marginalised sections of the society, who are at the base of the caste hierarchy, have come up with popularising their cultural history by giving these myths and memories new interpretations This gives them a sense of pride in their dalit identity

Narayan has carefully and logically chosen Uttar Pradesh (UP) as his research area, it is the only state where the dalit leadership has flourished as compared to other North Indian states like Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan He asks why dalit communities, who have always been ostracised, oppressed, and dominated by the upper castes under the Brahmanical cultural code of conduct, are politically flourishing in this state? He asserts that caste has emerged as a strong ideology in UP and has energised the political consciousness among the marginalised sections in the state He tries to show how the myths and history form the foundation for the dalits to construct their positive identity and self-respect This is particularly important for them to live in a world challenged by power, conflict and competition He has examined how imaginations and myths have been used to appeal to the marginalised

sections not to crave for sympathy or support but to fight for fame and power

The book is based on about eight years of field work and travel in UP, though Narayan has laid emphasis on Bundelkhand region, the Awadh region, and some villages of eastern UP where women heroes are more popular The study explores three women heroes (*Viranganas*) of the 1857 rebellion, namely, Jhalkaribai, Udadevi and Mahavirdevi The images and contribution of these three women heroes have been interpreted, reinterpreted, and packaged effectively to build an image of Mayawati The glorification process is intended to popularise Mayawati's charismatic image, which could be projected as a symbol of courage and leadership among the dalits Narayan has also given a detailed account of the Bahujan Samaj Party's strategy to build its electoral base in the state, which other dalit political parties have failed to do

Narayan has effectively used the dalit narratives and popular tales at the grass-root level which are deployed to develop political consciousness among the dalits The print media has been an effective medium to package and disseminate the stories and the plight of dalits to the literate section of the society, who in turn disseminate them to the illiterate people orally Another medium that is used effectively by the dalits is the visual medium During Mayawati's regime, statues of various dalit leaders and women heroes have been installed in public places, specifically in places where the dalit population is more As Narayan notes, these statues have a deeper impact on the memories of dalits than oral or written descriptions Thus, oral, print, and visual medium have been used by Bahujan Samaj Party to raise the collective consciousness of dalits

Narayan has also shown how political parties like the Bharatiya Janta Party use gods, heroes and other cultural resources to mobilise electoral support The Bharatiya Janata Party has also used the same strategy to glorify dalit culture to capture political power Narayan uses Ashish Nandy's argument that the political language remains fixed unless it is mixed up with culture, to support his observation The moment it is given a cultural meaning, political language becomes more appealing to the people

Narayan argues that the constructions of dalit myths have been used to contrast them the Brahmanical myths They give dalits an alternative reading which may be regarded as replication in the form of dissent rather than following the process of *sanskritisation*

While selecting the title of the study, Narayan has written *women heroes* instead of *heroines* One of the reasons could be that in dalit

imagination, women heroes have secured a central point To Narayan, they are heroes, not heroines, that women are powerful like men But, his statement is likely to result in misleading interpretations and may even question the identity of a woman The use of gender stereotypical words also betrays his inability to acknowledge woman's strength keeping in mind her feminine identity

This book is a good contribution to historical as well the contemporary field of dalit studies It acknowledges the voice of grass-root dalit population and unveils dalit culture which contrasts with the existing and accepted historical culture It also conveys the message that in democracy those who rule have the power to control the culture and manipulate it for their benefits

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Baldev Raj Nayar: *India's globalisation Evaluating the economic consequences* New Delhi Vistaar Publications, 2007, ix + 97 pp , Rs 225 (pb) ISBN 978-81-7829-758-3

The book under review is in the form of a lengthy essay on India's globalisation Although the theme is very much debated, the book critiques on how the critics have looked at globalisation and how their argument – that because of globalisation there is economic stagnation, deindustrialisation, denationalisation, destabilisation, impoverishment, and inequality in the economy – does not stand true in the present context Through a detailed case study of India, Baldev Raj Nayar tries to make out a strong case for globalisation In the beginning he examines if India is really integrated with world economy along the three dimensions, that is, the flow of goods and services, capital flows, and migration of people The volume of trade did increase after liberalisation In 2002 India was more globalised than the United States and Japan There is rapid expansion of service exports, India has become one of most important service exporters in the world After 1991, there has been an improvement in foreign investments, but it will take time to match the Chinese achievements in Foreign Direct Investment Labour mobility has increased, and this has led to capital flows to India from workers' remittances However, the impact of liberalisation on different regions has not been equal and, therefore, regional disparities do exist

Nayar outlines three periods of India's economic history (1) prior to liberalisation, 1956-57 through1974-75, which was the period of

command and control economy, (ii) intermittent incremental liberalisation, 1975-76 through 1990-91, and (iii) paradigm shift towards outward-looking economy since 1991 Nayar claims that there has been an increase in the average annual rate of economic growth from 3 4 per cent prior to globalisation to 9 per cent presently Unfortunately, the benefits of this increased economic growth rate have not percolated to majority of the population, the marginalised sections of the society Why is this not questioned and analysed?

Nayar argues that there has been increased industrial growth rate, increase in imports and entry of foreign multinationals which has not swamped the Indian industries India has made mark in information technology, pharmaceuticals and automobile components In computer software India has emerged stronger only because of liberalisation, this was possible only because of the big paradigm shift

Interestingly, Nayar mentions that, because of economic liberalisation, there has been no economic crisis in India There has been a decline in the poverty level after the reforms, and also reduced inequality The book gives the chronology of economic crises prior to liberalisation Globalisation is a complex issue, and analysing its impact has to be seen in much broader socio-cultural context Of course, Nayar makes it clear that he has dealt with only the economic aspect

Nayar views globalisation in India since 1975 as an attempt to integrate with world economy That is, 1975 can be considered as the beginning of liberalisation, it means that it was because of the efforts of the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi that liberalisation began in India There are few studies which take this standpoint on India's liberalisation India's globalisation is best associated with the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who broadened the scope of globalisation The year 1991 became the landmark year for the New Economic Reforms

India is emerging as a stronger economy, changing from being a controlled economy to an open economy The restrictions are becoming gradually removed with the hope that it will take care of social sectors and poverty reduction The book certainly sees that liberalisation has benefited the Indian economy, but regional disparities do exist Therefore, poverty-free society is a dream The study builds up an opinion for openness to globalisation The study recommends more investments in agriculture and industry The message is there is a need for more reforms

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Bernard Bel, Jan Brouwer, Biswajit Das, Vibodh Parthasarathi and Guy Poitevin (eds.): *Media and mediation (Communication processes* vol 1*)* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2005, 474 pp , Rs 750 (hb) ISBN 0-7619-3428-6

Media and Mediation is a collection of essays that attempts to provide insights into some of the questions raised about the media and its freedom The book highlights various related issues that may not seem directly relevant to the media but are commonly considered so Besides the editors – Bernard Bel, Jan Brouwer, Biswajit Das, Vibodh Parthasarathi and Guy Poitevin – other contributors to the volume include Deep Kanta Lahiri Choudhury, Dipankar Sinha, G Krishna Reddy, Jitendra Maid, Joel Ruet, Maytrayee Chaudhri, Pandit Padalghare, Pradip N Thomas, Shanti Kumar and Uma Chakravarti

The book is arranged in two parts – 'Constructions and Configurations' and 'Anatomies of Arbitration' Part I emphasises the historical connections between the state and the private sector and localises specific media forms Thematically, it shows the elaboration of typical 'strategies' of communication prepared by key institutions and ideologies in the Indian context Part II is related to the liberalist milieu and electronic communicative modes It concentrates on the 'tactical' areas of practice where diverse people from politics, advertisements and films enforce and contest these modes

The contributors to *Media and Mediation* have worked with one major objective, that is, to heighten the understanding of politics around communication in not only past and present times, but the future, too There is an intense concern that communication is drifting apart from its two main objectives that were once held high Universality, things related with the whole world, and Enlightenment They attempt to re-establish such objectives

Readers will come across some major questions in the book How fruitful is communication as a concept in yielding insights about the India of today, and that of yesterday and tomorrow? What types of insights does it yield? The answer to these questions call for deep reflection and this is what the book advocates The second question – What constitutes a critical research agenda in communication amid the fissured reality of the Information Age? – makes way for reasonable and rationale mass media practices

Media and Mediation elucidates the overpowering impact of the mass media and the politics behind it It points out the situations when biased mediation takes place and when media is forced to worked with

tied hands and constrained minds *Media and Mediation* takes off the masks that restrict mass media before the readers

Has modern India been successful in coping with the changes in the communication process, especially in the times of globalisation? In Part I, the chapters highlight significant perceptions about the different aspects of the changing roles of state and make the broad argument that it cannot afford to take a confrontationist attitude with the globalising market What is in fact recommended is that the modern information society of the state must take a middle path In Part II, the chapters analyse the growing and changing observation of men and women as an administrative agency in modern India The theme of the section raises a note of concern related to the strategy that people should develop to help emancipatory movements facing multiple challenges in the nation-state

The book offers a variety of discussions on the role of press, television and electoral campaigns in Andhra Pradesh, the making of virtual social world through multinational electronic mail, state, market and freedom of expression, the Kargil War or the Gulf War shown on TV, the communication strategies of Narmada activists, and the changing authoritarian frameworks concerning copyright

Media and Mediation is the first volume in the trilogy on 'Communication Processes' published by Sage Publications The other two volumes to follow this publication are *The Social and the Symbolic* [see review below] and *Culture and Confrontation*

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Bernard Bel, Jan Brouwer, Biswajit Das, Vibodh Parthasarathi and Guy Poitevin (eds): *The social and the symbolic (Communication processes* vol 2*)* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2007, 481 pp , Rs 895 (hb) ISBN 978-0-7619-3446-2

This edited volume is the second in the series 'Communication Processes', the first one being on *Media and Mediation* The editors try to highlight that communication, in essence, has to do with the modes of articulation of social relations between individuals in a society, something within the context of politics, something to be understood within networks of prestige, authority and power relations The first volume on *Media and Mediation* was also aiming at deepening the understanding of the politics involved in communication in today's world This second volume advances the thought

The editors do not see society in narrow closed-system perspective, but as a global combine of systems of relations Communication to them is the integrative articulation of such relations and the symbolic, which to their mind is the most appropriate conceptual framework to understand this It is in the symbolic capacity of the human mind that the social articulation of communication gets grounded, they argue Framed thus, all essays in the book try to get at the deeper symbolic resources upon which are built various forms of social communication and exchange Identity, work and health, three areas that are particularly relevant in communication studies but rarely recognised, are taken up in the different essays in the volume All try to emphasise that communication is relation through symbolic forms only and that the innate and creative potency of the human mind are 'more than a representation, personal or collective, more than a psychological trope, more than just a symbol, more than what they represent, and more than their modalities of social operation' (p 226)

The editors explore the symbolic grounds of social status and identity This, they do travelling through the occupational relations of artisans, peasants, stone-breakers, washermen, and birth attendants The first chapter, which is on negotiating modernity with symbolic resources, argues that symbolic communication operates through processes of translation which allows them to move through levels of social, mental and physical reality and binding them into a single configuration The second chapter deals with the symbolic facets of medical power Following these two chapters are essays in Part I that deal with oral narratives of the Minas, the Vadar and the Mang communities and a distinct chapter on *bhakti* as a machinery of communicative forms

These narratives have to do with self assertion and a projection of one's worth These are presented as the inner conflicts of the subalterns who through such narratives try to reverse an order that places them at the bottom of society This is not a novel argument, but one that has been presented evocatively by several others starting from Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, Roger Keesing, and Dipankar Gupta to Shail Mayaram among others However, these narratives from across a wider spectrum advance the argument further and persuade one that beneath the different forms of social communications and exchange there are deeper symbolic resources that one should explore

Symbolisation is significant not only for communities but also for individuals as the chapter on *bhakti* highlights This chapter is about an individual's despair being inverted into delight through *bhakti*, unlike that of the community's symbolisations analysed by the other papers in

this part At the individual level too, wish of defiance and inversion of structures of dominance are seen

The second part of the book projects themes of ambivalence and instability in symbolic forms Jan Brouwer's article on the communicating goddess of the artisan caste, the Viswakarmas, portrays the goddess as the Viswakarma agency of symbolic communication This functions to express the inner cohesion of the community and the outer distinction, according to Brouwer To his mind, the Visvakarma caste, fragmented by the crafts and sub-castes are unified through the cohesive dynamics of the goddess and it is unimaginable to think of their social bonds without the goddess His interesting argument is that the inner cohesion of the community and its outer distinction are made possible through the agency of the goddess who, according to Brouwer, communicates in three discourses between sub-castes, between Viswakarmas and the world, and in collaboration with the blacksmith between 'Nature' and 'Culture' in the processes of the crafts

From the peasant community, two 'testimonies' are used by the editors to emphasise the human mind's capacity to symbolically represent reality The cohesive nature of the village complex gets emphasised in the testimonies Two papers, one on the Vadar community and another, on the Parit communities are about the disruptive challenges of changing work patterns

The third part of the book is about bonds of health practices It is about indigenous health practices and knowledge inheritance The logic behind the clubbing of S A Samy's paper on the slum dwellers of Chennai and Chandrakant Kokate's paper on the Vaidu is not clear Some Vaidu women are midwives The paper could have gone well with the papers on midwives In the context of women birth-attendants, the editors are drawing attention on how the autonomous knowledge of a majority of women in India (elsewhere also) are targeted by the medical power and its hegemony This argument has been put forward very convincingly by medical anthropologists from a critical political economy framework

Marcel Mauss and Claude Levi-Strauss are the influences motivating the volume The relational aspect of symbolic thought makes it significant in communication which is an essence of the human collective, say the editors A good lead into the thoughts on symbolism by Mauss and Levi-Strauss can be had in the 'Overture Recasting the "Social" and the "Symbolic"', though the editors clearly do not see it as an Introduction either to their thoughts or to the volume

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Bijoy H. Boruah and Ramashanker Misra (eds.): *Social reality and tradition Essays in modes of understanding* Jaipur Rawat Publications, 2006, 214 pp , Rs 525 (hb) ISBN 81-316-0040-8

For long, the issue of understanding of culture and social reality has been treated as the preserve of sociologists and social anthropologists New dimensions emerge when political scientists, philosophers, economists and sociologists discuss the issues of social reality, 'ethno-social science' for India, postmodernism and social sciences, and objectivity threadbare This is exactly what happened in the workshop, 'The idea of Human Sciences' held at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur under the auspices of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla The present volume is a collection of ten papers presumably some presented in the workshop and others presented in a symposium, 'Understanding Tradition' held in honour of Professor Mohini Mullick on the occasion of her retirement from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT, Kanpur

The volume is divided into two sections The essays in the first section, 'Objectivity in Social Understanding' delve into the nature and pertinent methodological considerations in reflective enquiry into social phenomena, hermeneutics and the question of methodological objectivity Those in the second section, 'Culture and Tradition', seem to be rooted in the nature and character of tradition, particularly Indian tradition, evidently then, the concern here is with essentialising Indian culture in terms of its much clichéd, unity in diversity, and juxtapositioning tradition with modernity

Several writings on the issue of objectivity begin with the fundamental distinction between natural sciences and social sciences This one questions the basic notion of 'social' or better put, examines what constitutes social in the first place Juxtaposed with this are three essays centring on the indigenous view-point as the basis for understanding social reality An interesting critique of objectivity seems to develop as one goes through the essays Drawing from Karl Popper, Thomas Kuhn, Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and Karl Marx a significant point that emerges is that there are different kinds of objectivity Mullick states this in following words ' we may reasonably speak of different kinds of objectivity and science itself must be seen as a belief system, subscribing to its own *changing* set of objective truths' (p 75) She concludes with a note that scientific objectivity which forms the very basis of positivism as a paradigm in social sciences is itself 'social' in nature In this sense, objectivity cannot be treated as a rigid yardstick to make sense of social reality T V S

Ramamohan Rao makes the case for 'flexible interpretation of objectivity' by referring to Paul Feyerband's allusion to acknowledging the differences sometimes even at the cost of arriving at explanation He explains that the theory may be considered to be objective in so far as it is confined to national income which is itself logically consistent The limitation of objectivity is brought out by the example of Keynesian macroeconomic theory applied to the understanding of national income Critical features of an objective approach would be clear statement of facts that are used as premise, detailing the methods of drawing conclusions and subjecting the conclusions to verification from a logical vantage point

Bijoy H Boruah draws a comparison between 'social theory' and 'physical theory' in that, 'A physical theory gives us, among other things, a picture of underlying mechanisms or processes which explain the causal properties or powers of physical phenomena' (p 142) while ' a social theory about some social practice or institution serves beyond its explanatory and predictive purposes, to *define* social agents by making them understandable in terms of beliefs, desires, intentions and values making up their world-view' (p 143) Implicit throughout the essay and consolidated towards the last part is the idea that 'social theory' is imbued with the potential to transform understanding and consequently, the practice at the local level The author substantiates this in mentioning that his own understanding and practice of religion would be greatly influenced by Marxist theory of religion Would the practice of religion by local communities (guided by local beliefs and wisdom) be influenced by Marx in the same way as the author's? It is difficult to agree with editors' generalisation in the introduction that 'A social theory is nothing but a theoretical formulation and articulation of a social practice and its norms, aiming at replacing or extending society's pre-theoretical understanding of the practice' (p 25)

In the specific case of social reality in India, Rajan Gurukkal objects to the practice of equating Indian tradition with Hindu tradition He lays emphasis on the multiplicity of traditions constituting the fabric of people This comes out in contrast in G C Pande's essay which consolidates the oneness that underlies the diversity in India knitted together by 'ethical consciousness' He writes, 'Originating in the interaction of diverse communities through the ages, Indian culture is a continental and catholic tradition that, in its essence, is not Indian in any restricted sense, but simply the Indian version of *philosophia perennis*' (p 183) A K Saran describes tradition in terms of its 'formless, transcendental and supra-personal' character It is not a sociological

category at all and cannot be defined Rather, tradition is a kind of 'anthropo-metaphysical idea and reality'

There is no denying that the significance of the book lies in the basic theme which it addresses and the fact that it brings together writings of those trained in different disciplines One does feel compelled to add, however, that the worth of this book would have been greatly enhanced by more precise language and copy-editing In its present form, the introduction itself consists of several excessively long sentences, the name of one of the editors is spelt differently on the cover and on the contents page Notwithstanding all this, the book opens fresh ground for meaningful discussion on social reality and tradition

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M.N. Karna (ed.): *Democracy, pluralism and conflict* Jaipur Rawat Publications, 2006, viii + 216 pp , Rs 525 (hb) ISBN 81-316-0019-X

The book under review assumes significance in the context of the renewed debate on democracy and the attendant complexities involved in its working in contemporary times It is possible to discern two broad lines of argument on the question, especially in the context of polities that have been grappling with the implications of reconciling between the imperatives of democracy and the compulsions of social movements One line of argument has it that, in the context of democracies which have grown out of authoritarian (or semi-authoritarian) regimes, there is a decline in the space for social movement activities, with the democratic set-up providing a kind of soothing atmosphere for the actors and the terms of conventional politics taking over the protest activities of the populace The other line of argument contends that, contrary to the expectation that movements and protest activities decline in a society, there would be a spurt due to the greater freedom found in democracy Of course, the degree of control and regulation may differ across the fabric of nations

It must be noted that the foregoing arguments have significance only if one works with an idea of democracy as referring to the laws and practices by which citizens and groups are endowed with rights to assemble, speak, write, and associate freely, are able to participate in political decisions through elections, and have those rights protected by an accessible and independent system of courts The essays comprising the book find themselves engaging mostly with the latter line of argument,

while also bringing to light the many challenges that Indian democracy has to contend with

Nine essays tackle a variety of themes on the process and functioning of democracy and pluralism in India The essay by T K Oommen and the editorial introduction by M N Karna set the tone for the treatment that follows through a variety of cases and scenarios of conflict Oommen provides a conceptual analysis of the notions of pluralism and democracy and their relationship in a plural society like India According to him, there are six factors (patriarchy, inequality, sectorality, peripherality, externality, and hierarchy) that trigger conflict in culturally diverse and politically plural societies like India Interestingly, these six factors seem to underwrite the issues presented in the other essays in the volume

Rowena Robinson tries to understand the relationship between secularism and democracy, striving in particular to re-conceive the term 'secularism' against the backdrop of a distorted understanding of democracy espoused by the Hindutva nationalists in Gujarat and elsewhere in India S K Nanda attempts to bring into focus the phenomena of cultural nationalism in the context of multi-national countries in general and India in particular He focuses on the problems that arise out of the conflicting interests of provincial state and cultural groups in the administration of state boundaries The tensions that arise out of this disjuncture between the state and the nationalities, on the one hand, and the tensions between nationalities, on the other, are traced with the concepts of cultural and political nationalism

Virginius Xaxa dwells on the relationship between democracy and citizenship with reference to tribal rights in the colonial and post-colonial India Vinod K Jairath engages the postmodern notion of the 'celebration of difference' and interrogates the notion in the multinational context Jairath argues forcefully for recovering the shared spaces which have been distorted by the exclusionist agendas of groups harping on the politics of difference, both majority and minority Paramjit S Judge traces the factors (particularly non-ideological ones) involved in attracting individuals to forms of politics like Naxalism and the demand for Khalistan in Punjab

The contributions by N Sudhakar Rao and Kulwinder Kaur bring out the problems in the north-east India The former analyses the conflicts of interest involved in the making of north-east by bringing to the forefront the problems of Assam He examines the conflict and tensions in the region against the background of a cultural nationalism which the early nationalists espoused in the rest of India Kaur engages the complex Naga problem which the Indian state has failed to resolve till date Anjan Ghosh's examines the violence surrounding the Godhra incident in

Gujarat, highlighting the newness in the communal violence witnessed in that state He deploys the suggestive notion of 'will to hate' for grasping the pogrom or ethnic cleansing which underwrote the bout of communal violence in Gujarat

Although the essays have their origins in a seminar organised by the Department of Sociology, North-Eastern Hill University (in May 2002), the volume as a whole displays a coherence of theme and exposition What is more, the book is timely as it presents us with perspectives to understand the relationship between state actors and non-state groups, and the interactions between nationalities This book would surely interest social scientists across disciplines, as well as students of political sociology and social movements

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Rehana Ghadially (ed.): *Urban women in contemporary India A reader* New Delhi Sage Publications, 2007, 372 pp , Rs 595 (pb) ISBN 978-0-7619-3520-9

This volume is a collection of twenty-three essays illustrating urban Indian women's everyday issues and struggle for gender equality in the post liberalisation scenario Gender and globalisation being its overarching theme, this volume brings together essays (except four) originally published in various journals, under six major themes Re-constructing Gender, Violence, Media, Neo-liberal Globalisation, Information and Communication Technologies, and Politics and Political Participation These essays attempt to grapple with the complexity of changes brought about by globalisation in the lives of urban, middle-class, educated women

This volume goes beyond portraying women as merely passive recipients, emphasising on their agencies in the face of new challenges brought about by globalisation It discusses the strategies employed by women striving to strike a balance between the traditional cultural expectations and the images of 'modern woman' (which do not necessarily conflict with patriarchal ideology) constructed by globalised media, information and communication technologies, and new political ideologies

Rehana Ghadially's introduction to the Reader emphasises the need for 'revamping' of strategies of women's movement in the light of the phenomenon of neo-liberal globalisation She points at the change in the

parameters within which women and the nation functioned The shift in thrust by the women's groups from protests against globalisation perceiving the threat of an increased feminisation of poverty and commodification of women to dealing with the impact of it on women and society is illustrated

The first section, 'Re-constructing Gender', narrates how, in the process of negotiating between the already existing traditional meanings of gender roles and relations and the new meanings bestowed upon it by globalisation, young women and men both reinforce and redefine existing gender constructions, thus being active agents and not merely passive receptors of the changes brought in as a result of globalisation

The section on violence delineates the role of new technological and economic innovations in the emergence of new forms of violence against women while the old forms continue to exist Strategies employed by women's groups in handling cases of domestic violence, problem of dowry harassment, domestic violence bill and the draft bill on sexual harassment are discussed Of special interest is the chapter by Veronica Magar discussing the formation of informal women's courts to combat violence against women by women's groups in the slums of Delhi

The section on media elucidates how even in post-liberalisation phase large number of women who are being drawn into the media are still portrayed within the traditional spaces of the household and patriarchy The new patriarchy depicts empowered women as those with the perfect body and possessing the latest consumer goods Essays discuss the ways in which men and women perceive new images shown in media and their strategic picking up of images and ideas that help them either to reinforce or resist gender stereotypes

Like the section on media, the essays in the next section on neo-liberal globalisation also brings out how globalisation, although seems to create new opportunities for women, marginalises them both in the employment sector and also in their struggle against gendered stereotyping Reinforcement of patriarchal notions of the connection between women, sexuality and national honour in the context of a beauty pageant, marginalisation of women into low-waged and strenuous jobs with liberalisation of economy, and the new insights in the understanding of globalisation by the feminists are dealt in this section Sharmila Rege's article, which is a useful theoretical work in this section, engages with the feminist contributions to the understanding of globalisation

The section on ICT (Information and Communication Technology) brings forth the debate between ICT as a means of speeding and spreading development and ICT as bringing in digital divide The essays explain that the most relevant divide is the gender divide which further

criss-crosses with other divides such as class, region, and religion ICTs, the authors write, can be important tools for women's empowerment, but much depends on the context within which these new technologies are utilised One interesting article by Rehana Ghadially and Anikar Hassleff's discusses the role of cyber cafes in bridging the existing gender divide In the context of differential access to training and use by women, cyber cafes, they say, act as places of first experience of computers for many women, and it is these cafes that also act as learning places of computer skills for them

The section 'Politics and Political Participation' demonstrates, in the context of rising right-wing politics, how the gendered image of the nation and its honour influences to a large extent the ways in which women participate in politics With increasing co-optation of the language of women's movement's demand for women's equal participation in politics, fundamentalist Hindu groups in the name of empowerment are engaging more and more women in spreading the politics of hatred and of Hindu nationalism These essays show how the ideology of right wing groups calls for militarisation of women to protect their 'honour' from the 'other', but restrict them from questioning the authority of Hindu patriarchy

The essays fit into the overarching theme that globalisation has brought in numerous changes in urban women's lives but has not necessarily freed them from the shackles of patriarchy It has instead brought in new forms of discrimination The Reader is a useful collection of empirical works on gender issues in the context of neo-liberal globalisation

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Sadhna Arya and Anupama Roy (eds.): *Poverty, gender and migration* (Women and migration in Asia, Vol 2) New Delhi Sage Publications, 2006, 261 pp , Rs 320 (pb) ISBN 0-7619-3459-6

The book is the second in the series of volumes on female migration published by Sage in 2006 The papers presented in the international conference on Women and Migration in Asia held in Delhi in December 2003, are the source of all these volumes The volumes, including the present one, *inter alia* challenge the popular notion about migration being predominantly male and dispel the myth of female

migration as dependent and/or merely associational (for example, through marriage)

Containing eleven essays on both internal and transnational migrations, the book is about the poor migrant women of Asia In their editorial introduction, Sadhana Arya and Anupama Rao bring out that poverty is a push factor for migration for lower-class women, and globalisation has created specific conditions for female migratory flows which are temporal Most of the poor unskilled women have got employment as domestic servants overseas which has not altered the positioning of their home country in the hierarchy of states in this asymmetrical global world order Some countries like Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Philippines may get branded as 'nations of servants' The poor rural women who have migrated to the urban centres in their country have also not been able to alter the class dynamics in their migratory places, despite interesting shifts occurring in their position within their (own) family What is evident from the above facts is a reconfiguring of race, class, gender and states' hierarchies in the global context

Many papers suggest that the transnational migration is being encouraged by Asian states in order to mitigate their balance of payment crisis Sepali Kottegoda in her paper shows that the women migrants from Sri Lanka who work in West Asian countries as housemaids are the main source of foreign exchange remittance to Sri Lanka even though they are categorised as unskilled workers who earn lower wages Similarly, Maureen Pagadaun points out that Philippini government promotes overseas work through the establishment of agencies and programmes tasked with the welfare and delivery of efficient services to applicants, who ultimately are significant source of additional government revenues Jagannath Adhikari's paper on Nepali migrant women shows that women earn 12 per cent of the total remittance entering Nepal

The essays, in general, highlight that the migrant women have experienced a sense of empowerment by virtue of being the main providers for their families at home The 'reproductive work' overseas has become important source of income to the families and foreign exchange to the home countries For these reasons, the migrant domestic workers have gained some kind of visibility and significance which was hitherto unknown Domestic work, traditionally regarded as limiting women's development and personal growth, now contributes to women's public exposure, their economic autonomy, and a new found personal drive for fulfilment Adhikari writes about the Nepali migrant women that these women have been able to save 61 per cent of their income which is higher than that of men Women were even able to acquire

property in their names from these savings Kottegoda comes with similar findings in the case of Sri Lanka where the migrant women have become more strategic in planning for management of their earnings Ravinder Kaur's paper on migrant domestic workers of south Delhi slums captures the increasing intra-household bargaining power of these women despite their poverty and vulnerabilities The anonymity of city has also allowed some upper-caste domestic workers to undermine caste hierarchy and transcend the prescribed sexual norms

In sum, these papers point to the enhanced agency of women due to migration But Shashank Shekhar Sinha's paper on tribal Chotanagpur tells a different story In this case, the women migrants into tea plantations and mine work lost their traditional self-supporting economic roles of agricultural workers and became migrant wage workers and casual labourers, which had disastrous consequences for women The women in prostitution are another category of migrants who are on the margins and relegate to the realms of 'illegitimate' and 'illegal' Geertanjali Gangoli's paper on poverty and sex work in eastern India shows the harsh realities of the poor women from Bengal and Orissa who migrate to bigger cities and become sex workers

Most of the papers bring out that, for migrant women, the extended family network is assuming special importance both in facilitating migration and in providing support and care to the children and family who are left behind in their home country Despite the growing sense of empowerment and inflated agency, the migrant women are not free from violence and exploitation Many a time these women are lured by unscrupulous agents who push them into sex industry or make them work in extremely difficult jobs in foreign countries It is also not always easy for a migrant woman to gain acceptance in her own society once she is back from the foreign land The sexuality of the women who stayed alone for longer periods and the women who migrated to the Gulf countries are under the critical moral gaze of their own community Some of the papers also highlight the competition and conflict among the migrant domestic workers and among the women in prostitution Kaur s paper goes on to show as to how the female domestic workers 'zealously' guard 'their households' and do not allow other workers to infringe on their turf.

Except the couple of essays which do not deliver what they promise, the majority of essays in the book are illuminating The editorial introduction is meticulous and diligent Use of simple and jargon-free English adds to the merit of the book

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Sakarama Somayaji and Ganesha Somayaji (eds.): *Sociology of globalisation perspectives from India* Jaipur Rawat Publications, 2006, xvi + 448 pp , Rs 850 (hb) ISBN 81-316-0030-0

The anthology under review lies at the intersection of the sociological debate on the dialectics of 'global and local' inherent in the contemporary wave of globalisation Scholars have widely recognised that there have been qualitative shifts in the nature of global exchanges and interconnections in the course of this century What is undeniable is that globalisation, in one form or another, has its tremendous impact on the lives of everyone on the planet, whatever their age, class, ethnicity, gender or wherever they live The experience of globalisation becomes more tangible when its effects are perceived locally It is at this level, the volume gains significance as it dwells on the local consequences of the global interconnectedness Hence, it seeks to understand the effects of globalisation at the micro-level and builds on the central issue of 'global-local dialectics' by examining the complex relations between local situations and their global contexts

Globalisation refers to both the compression as well as an intensification of the world as a whole, which is currently operationalised as the 'global-local nexus' Therefore, it incorporates a dual identity of 'the global in the local' and 'the local in the global' Underlying the issue of 'global-local dialectics' is the question of homogeneity versus heterogeneity, which is mirrored in the debate on 'globalisation from above' and 'globalisation from below' In this respect the volume makes a unique contribution to the globalisation discourse as it provides an informed discussion on the perspective of 'globalisation from below', which is scantly found in the literature Aditya Raj aptly employs the conceptual framework of 'globalisation from below' in his analysis of the linkage between globalisation and diaspora and introduces it as a conceptual tool in understanding the 'resistance against corporate globalisation'

The volume revolves around the overall theme of socio-cultural change in the climate of the current wave of globalisation In view of this avowed objective, the introductory note by the editors visibly orient the readers to the theoretical approach in which the volume is set and around which the papers are apparently organised In this endeavour, the editors review three major theories – world polity theory, world system theory, and world culture theory – which address the issue of change in the context of globalisation The volume proposes an emphatic inclination to the cultural thesis as a useful theoretical perspective in perceiving the socio-cultural effects of globalisation in terms of its micro level implications, although 'the economic content of globalisation is not

neglected' (p 5) Hence, the other two theories are negated on the grounds that they do not adequately capture, 'how globalisation impinges on the local and how the local responds' (p 3), and proposes to dwell on the contemporary cultural processes in India

Notwithstanding this pronounced theoretical orientation, a sizeable number of the articles in the volume seem to be still confined to looking at the economic concerns of globalisation Perceiving this apparent concern of the contributors, the editors have concluded the introduction stating, 'all contributors to this volume directly or indirectly show that economic impact is a primary concern of the globalisation process' (p 12) In this context the article by Walter Fernandes titled 'Globalisation, Culture and Fundamentalism Impact on North-eastern India' needs special mention True to the distinctive theoretical orientation of the volume, situated in the backdrop of fundamentalism, the article focuses on the cultural implication of globalisation in the northeast, brilliantly linking economy and culture

The distinctive feature of the volume is two-fold the micro orientation and the special treatment on certain specific regions and categories of the Indian subcontinent As distinct from the voluminous literature that usually hovers around the macro elements of globalisation such as the global penetration of market, international flow of capital and the transnational agencies and corporations, the articles in the volume embark upon an examination on the effects of globalisation at the local level Secondly, the volume includes essays on the impact of globalisation on certain specific areas of Indian life (rural and urban communities, tribal people and slums) and systems (education, health, media) and social categories (children, elderly, poor and women) Such a wide and broad treatment in a single edited work on the localisation aspects of globalisation appears to be rare in the plethora of literature on globalisation, though some of the articles in these sections remain merely at the descriptive level with some categorical statements Occasionally, the reader would wonder the thematic logic with which the chapters have been organised, as the volume seems like a mixture of essays on the micro dimension of globalisation placed one after another portraying a sociological collage on globalisation

Furthermore, the objective globalisation, driven by global economy and information and communication technology, simultaneously carries within a subjective globalisation, resulting in newer identities at the personal and collective levels in the face of increased polytechnicity, multiculturality, and the opening of post-colonial spaces Notwithstanding the unambiguous focus of the edited volume on the micro aspect of globalisation, a discussion on the dynamics of the subjective

practices of everyday life trying to unfold how subjects mediate the processes of globalisation seems to be missing in the volume

The collection of articles in this volume explores the global spread of market culture and the manner in which Indian society appropriates, indigenises, negotiates and resists the contingencies they bring forth in the local cultures In this respect, the volume is a sociological response to some of the pertinent questions emerging under the purview of globalisation In other words, the volume is located in the contemporary debate on culture and cultural change initiated through the process of globalisation seeking to understand its significance for India today

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Veena Das: *Life and words Violence and the descent into the ordinary* New Delhi Oxford University Press, 2007, xiv + 281 pp , Rs 595 (hb) ISBN 0-19-568758-2

Veena Das has brought together in this book several essays that have appeared in different places, all connected through the threads of time, violence and subjectivity Words illumine Das' world, but she is also excruciatingly aware of what they do not say and of what cannot be said Violence impairs language One of Das' subjects, Manjit, taught her that one could utter words about violence but 'it was as if one's touch with these words and hence with life itself had been burned or numbed' (p 221)

Probably the first Indian anthropologist to show a serious and committed concern with these subjects, Das has over the years written (see, for instance *Critical Events An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India*, New Delhi Oxford University Press, 1995) and edited works such as *Mirrors of Violence Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia* (New Delhi Oxford University Press, 1990), *Violence and Subjectivity* (with Arthur Kleinman, Mamphela Ramphele and Pamela Reynolds, Berkeley , University of California Press, 2000), and *Remaking a World Violence, Social Suffering and Recovery* (with Arthur Kleinman, Margaret Lock, Mamphela Ramphele and Pamela Reynolds, Berkeley University of California Press, 2001)

In *Life and Words*, as Das' subtitle shows, she is concerned with violence and the recovery of life The recovery of life, as she says, does not happen 'through some grand gestures in the realm of the transcendent but through a descent into the ordinary' (p 7) Her consistent engagement with the linguistic motif is evident in her construction of the event of

violence, of trauma, of loss, as a failure 'of the grammar of the ordinary' (*ibid*)

The essays traverse specific horrific events on the Indian subcontinent including Partition, the violence against the Sikhs in 1984, and even the violence against the Muslims in Gujarat in 2002 In the course of the analysis, Das considers the construction of several objects that anthropology has traditionally found difficult beings These include the state, the notion of time, the idea of the nation, militancy and the stuff of rumour

It is from the locus of pain that Das writes Her subjects allow their pain to 'happen' to her Das argues that the anthropological role lies not just in providing data or facts that can be used by policy, but in witnessing the descent into the everyday Words are led home, she says How does the anthropologist write pain? She does so through acknowledgement and recognition Pain makes a claim for this acknowledgement In the anthropology of pain, the anthropologist does not merely lend her voice to another's experience, she lends her body In making this argument, Das quotes from Wittgenstein's *Blue and Brown Books* this memorable passage (pp 39-40)

> In order to see that it is conceivable that one person should have pain in another's person's body, one must examine what sorts of facts we call criteria for a pain being in a certain place Suppose I feel a pain which on the evidence of the pain alone, e g with closed eyes, I should call a pain in my left hand Someone asks me to touch the painful spot with my right hand I do so and looking around perceive that I am touching my neighbour's hand This would be pain *felt* in another's body

The evocation of Wittgenstein in Das' writings moves Stanley Cavell, in his Foreword to the work, to suggest that the book may be read as a companion to Wittgenstein's preoccupations with pain I see Das' work as invaluable in bringing our attention unceasingly to forms of knowing that do not depend on words or the intellect Knowing lies in the ways of inhabiting the world, in the incorporating of the work of suffering Das quotes from Martha Nussbaum that to 'grasp either a love or a tragedy by intellect is not sufficient for having real human knowledge of it A piece of true understanding is missing' (p 76) As writer, teacher and researcher, Das has consistently moved away from Weber's 'rational' being, as she has delved into the murkier side of religion or the depths of human emotions and faced, with almost existentialist courage, the rising terror of the anthropologist standing at the edge of meaning, looking into the heart of darkness

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Wendy Singer: *'A constituency suitable for ladies' and other social histories of Indian elections* New Delhi Oxford University Press, 2007, xiv + 246 pp , Rs 575 (hb) ISBN 0-19-567900-8

The phrase, 'A constituency suitable for ladies' was first used in the Congress Party policy in 1962 Such a phrase and the attempt to seek women candidates for certain seats in state legislatures and Parliament, speaks of a whole history of women's participation in Indian politics While we have a lot of literature on politics and democratic process in India, politics and backward caste and class assertion, regional coalitions, etc , the narratives of women as special players in electoral politics has been missing Wendy Singer's book bridges this gap Separate electorates for women in politics and/or active participation of women in politics reveal larger issues within election politics that the conception of constituency is a fractured complex, representing interest groups, segments of population, region, etc It also implies re-enactment of citizenship for the women and role of women as makers of democracy

In the broadest sense, the book argues that special status accorded to women in elections has been both advantageous and disadvantageous for women political hopefuls Despite the fact that a special category assumes commonality among women, Singer warns that women citizens in India are diverse by ideology, status, culture and class Methods of social history form the basis of this study To understand the domain of the history of everyday lives, Singer adopts a range of techniques including the use of government documents, archival sources, oral histories, and the tangible culture of elections There are many narratives one could relate about the social history of women in elections women as a special category in early Indian elections, one-third representation of women in Panchayats, women's candidacy, and rhetoric and actual access to power at the ground level These narratives are addressed in the different chapters of the book

Separate electorates define women as a constituency both in the terms of physical space and political interest In the early years after independence, the Congress Party had targeted 15 per cent representation for women, especially in the state elections While the policy was not quite successful then, today the notion of women as a constituency is much more pronounced and articulate In political terms, such representation defines women's interests as minority interest and provides an avenue for political advancement for interested women activists in this largely male dominated society

Panchayat is one institution which has truly become inextricably linked to the history of women participation in elections The 73rd

Amendment of the Constitution not only established new female power for panchayats, but also required one-third representation of women in these local governments Whether women are just shadows of their male associates acting as puppets or are real actors and decision-makers is not an easily resolvable debate Mostly the activeness or lack of it of a women candidate depends on particular locale and context What is observable is that women's representation in panchayats has brought forth a new discourse of development linked to health, child welfare, community development and 'upliftment of women' NGOs and autonomous women's organisations also emerged from the 1970s onwards in order to aid and support women and women's issues

The history of women candidates in Indian elections tells the stories of both those who have run for office and those who wish to run Powerful women have always been part of the political landscape, but beyond them there is a general story of gender discrimination The resources necessary for running for office including family backing, financial means, and political patronage are scarce While gaining access to sufficient resources is a competitive and difficult process for any candidate, women find them more difficult to attain Singer comes up with interesting cases of candidates and non-candidates aspiring for political office Despite obstacles, many women have been successful in knocking at the male bastion However, there is a long way to go, despite widespread support for over more than a decade from various walks of life, the bill to reserve one-third of the seats in Parliament and state legislative assemblies is yet to be passed

The evolution of women as a special category in Indian politics has consequences, manifest and latent While it surely leads to empowerment and emancipation of some, it also reinforces the existing fractures and fissures in gender relations Focussing as it does on a variety of pertinent issues and themes, *'A Constituency Suitable for Ladies'* is a work of scholarship that should be of interest to sociologists, political scientists and students of women studies

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Books Received

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Bose, A B 2006 *Social security for the old Myth and reality* New Delhi Concept Publishing Company

Breman, Jan 2007 *The poverty regime in village India Half a century of work and life at the bottom of the rural economy in South Gujarat* New Delhi Oxford University Press

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Mukherjee, Arun Prosad 2007 *Maoist 'spring thunder' the Naxalite movement (1967-1972)* Kolkata K P Bagchi and Company

Pati, Jagannath (ed) 2007 *Adoption Global perspective and ethical issues* New Delhi Concept Publishing Company

Prakasam, C P and R B Bhagat (ed) 2007 *Population and environment linkages* Jaipur Rawat Publications

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INDIAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Secretary's Report
(2006)

Esteemed colleagues and friends

It gives me great pleasure to present before you the Secretary's Report for the period January to December 2006 Let me begin by placing on record my deep sense of gratitude to all the members for their constant encouragement and support during this period, and I look forward to receiving similar co-operation in future In all modesty, I would say that our team of office bearers and members of the MC has done its best to serve the Indian Sociological Society and to safeguard its long-term interests However, I do not claim that all our activities were without any shortcomings I would personally apologise for any lapses and deficiencies in carrying out my duties as Secretary as it was not easy to keep

I

Before I start reporting the major activities of the Society, on beha f of the General Body and the Managing Committee, with pleasure, let me sincerely thank or S Ramachandran, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Madras for his valuable support in making this conference a grand success We are thankful to Rev Fr Rector Boniface Jayaraj and Rev Fr Principal Albert Muthumalai SJ of Loyola College for providing us the infrastructural facilities for holding the conference

I must place on record that the Organising Secretary Professor D Jayalakshmi and Co-Organising Secretary Fr Xavier Vedam with their team of dedicated colleagues and volunteers have put in their very best efforts in making the conference a great success In spite of crisis of resources and large number of participants, the organisers have prov ded a creative atmosphere for smooth conduct of academic sessions, as well as for a pleasant stay for all delegates We know how much they have been toiling for the past several months, meticulously planning and

attending to every minute detail of the conference The ISS sociological conferences have been always attended by around 450-500 delegates. This time you will be happy to know that there were 600-plus advance registrations and another 100 or more may register between today and tomorrow Thus the team of Professor Jayalakshmi and Fr Vedam have earned the honour of hosting the largest-ever gathering of sociologists under the banner of the ISS We express our appreciation and gratitude to the Vice-Chancellor, University of Madras, Principal, Loyola College, Professor Jayalakshmi, Fr Vedam and the faculty members, research scholars and student volunteers of the Department of Sociology, University of Madras as well as Loyola College for their co-operation and help

II

We are aware that this conference is taking place in extraordinary times for sociologists and social scientists There is growing significance of social challenges before the Indian society The problems of injustices in the name of gender, caste, class, region, religion and ethnicity are challenging the foundations of our system There is increasing awareness of the limits of the prevailing model of nation building as the nation is drifting towards the LPG (liberalisation-privatisation-globalisation) paradigm There are more losers than gainers, and there is increasing gap between the rural and urban India, the literate and illiterate Indians We are going through a great transition due to the Indian engagement with ICT revolution The technological transformation is symbolised by the expansion of electronic media and growing significance of computer and internet in every walk of life Now the sociologists have to play a much more active role than ever before in empowering our society with the knowledge of new challenges and the emerging responses as well as the crisis and opportunities inherent in the new transition It is unfortunate that there is no preparation on the part of our policy makers to strengthen the intellectual resources and financial support for promoting sociological studies and projects There is dangerous depletion of departments of sociology in colleges and universities Commercialisation of education is shrinking the space for learning and teaching of sociology, whereas the imperatives of democratic nation building and inclusive globalisation have increased the relevance and role of sociologists in India and around the world The Indian Sociological Society is duty bound to alert not only the sociologists and social scientists but all who care about our society and nation to resist such a decline and promote investment in teaching and research in the field of sociology

Needless to say that the theme of the conference 'Science, Technology and Society Emerging Issues' has great contemporary relevance In four separate symposia, invited scholars have elaborated the sub-themes on 'Science, Technology and Social Inequality', 'Changing Demographic Profile of India', 'Internationalising Sociology Bridging the North-South Divide' and 'Emerging Knowledge Society in Tamil Nadu'

As is our tradition, we have devoted one symposium to the regional problems of the host state This time we are conducting a special symposium on 'Emerging Knowledge Society in Tamil Nadu', realising the crucial importance of the issue for the nation We are grateful to all the chairpersons and speakers of the various symposia for so kindly accepting our invitation and making their valuable contributions

III

Now permit me to report some of the major events and activities undertaken by the Society in the reporting period

Special Session at the World Congress of Sociology

The World Congress of International Sociological Association (ISA) at Durban on 23-29 July 2006 was marked by very active presence of Indian Sociological Society and our members Professor P K B Nayar, President organised a special symposium under the banner of the Indian Sociological Society at the Durban Congress on the theme 'Internationalising Sociology Challenges of Globalisation' One hundred thirty-two delegates from twenty-six countries attended the two sessions of our programme The speakers came from eight countries in five continents including two former presidents of the ISA The ISS also convened a get-together of Indian delegates as well as the sociologists of Indian origin from various countries It was attended by forty-two persons The Durban activities of the ISS have further attracted sociologists from different areas of the world

We are disappointed by the rejection of the ISS request to the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) for travel support to the official delegation of our Society to attend the World Congress of Sociology of ISA It must be noted that there has been a tradition of ICSSR support for ISS participation in the World Congress which takes place only once in four years and we have to make sure that it is not discontinued Let us make it sure that the ICSSR authorities do not repeat such a strange decision in future as it is their duty to facilitate the

representation of Indian sociologists through their formal association in the World Congress which takes place only once in four years

At the same time, we are elated that the global sociological community has expressed its respect for the Indian participants through honouring Dr I P Modi, Dr Vinod Chandra, Dr Debal SinghaRoy and others by electing them in leadership positions of ISA system for various responsibilities and programmes of the ISA

Research Committees

The Research Committees (RCs) constitute the core activities of our Society Hence, the growth of our professional body will be judged by the motivation and promotion given to the research endeavours of its members In this regard, ISS can be proud of the research activities of its members

For promoting the health of our Research Committees, the second workshop was organised by the Rajasthan Sociological Association and the Sociology Department of the Rajasthan University in Jaipur on 30-31 October 2006 We are thankful to Dr Modi, Dr Sharada Jain, Dr Leena Paramar and other colleagues in the Rajasthan Sociological Association as well as the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur for organising this workshop very well The first Workshop was hosted by Dr P Vijaya-lakshmi Reddy of the Department of Sociology, Osmania University, Hyderabad in July 2005 I wish to mention that the organisers at Jaipur mobilised their own resources without bringing any financial encumbrance to the Society

We are going to have a follow-up about the recommendations of the RC workshop, as reported by Dr Modi, the Convenor in the *ISS Newsletter* (5 [2], December 2006) We are also happy to announce that the next RC workshop will be organised in 2007 by the Department of Sociology, Lucknow University under the convenorship of Professor Rajesh Mishra

Sociological Bulletin

As you are aware the periodicity of the *Sociological Bulletin* has been increased from two issues per volume to three issues with effect from Volume 53 (2004) Professor N Jayaram, Managing Editor of the *Sociological Bulletin,* deserves our special commendation for the professional commitment with which he has improved the quality of the journal and its prompt publication You have already received Nos 1, 2 and 3 of Vol 55 (2006)

I am sure that the *Bulletin* has become an essential reading for all of us in the profession to help in our teaching and research Enlisting new and adequate number of paid subscribers to the *Bulletin* is the need of the hour Even under these financial constraints the MC decided to increase the number of annual issues of the *Bulletin* from two to three to satisfy the increasing urge of scholars to publish in our journal Notwithstanding this increasing demand, ours is a refereed journal with quality control

Friends, due to the mounting costs of production and postage of the *Bulletin*, and its increased periodicity, the Society continues to be under financial strain Each issue of the *Bulletin* now costs us more than Rs 1 25 lakhs To meet this, we must mobilise additional resources We are happy to report that the ICSSR is considering enhancing its annual grant to the Society from the next financial year

May I take this opportunity to remind those members who have not yet paid Rs 1,000 for meeting the mailing/postal expenses of the to kindly do so at the earliest

Digitisation of the *Sociological Bulletin*

I am happy to inform you that the digitisation process of the *Sociological Bulletin* is completed with the co-operation of Sir Dorabji Tata Memorial Library, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai under the supervision of Professor Jayaram Now, we shall be able to avail all the back numbers of the *Bulletin* in one CD The total expenditure for this project is Rs 1 35 lakhs and the Society has made the full payment

M.N. Srinivas Memorial Lecture

The M N Srinivas Memorial lecture series, as we all know, was instituted by the Society in 2001 This was made possible because the M N Srinivas Endowment Fund could be set up by the Society out of the contributions received from a group of former students and colleagues of Professor Srinivas – who bequeathed the entire royalties of their edited volumes (published in honour of Professor Srinivas) to the Indian Sociological Society The ICCSR has given the ISS a matching grant for it

Professor André Béteille, our distinguished colleague, delivered the first lecture in this series on the topic 'Hierarchical and Competitive Inequality' at the AISC held in December 2001 at the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar In the following two years we were honoured to have the memorial lectures delivered by such distinguished scholars as Professor P C Joshi and Professor N R Sheth Professor Leela Dube was invited to deliver the fourth memorial lecture, but unfortunately it had to

be postponed owing to her ill health She is keen to deliver the lecture at a place and date convenient to her Professor T N Madan has delivered the fifth memorial lecture on the theme 'The Sociology of Hinduism Reading Backward from Srinivas to Weber' in Jammu last October Eminent sociologist Professor J P S Uberoi of the University of Delhi will be delivering the sixth memorial lecture during the XXXII AISC

Professor M.N. Srinivas Memorial Prize for Young Sociologists

As you already know, the M N Srinivas Endowment Committee increased the prize money from Rs 1,000 to Rs 2,000 from 2003 onwards Unfortunately, last year we received only two entries and they did not measure up to the standard the Committee has set for the prize Therefore, the Committee had recommended that the prize should not be awarded in 2005

The Committee has decided to award this year's Prize to Dr Arima Mishra, Department of Sociology, University of Delhi for her essay 'Local Perceptions of Famine Study of a Village in Orissa' The essay has been selected for the award from among the papers published during 1 January 2003–31 December 2005 in various social science journals or edited volumes in English, published in India and submitted to the Selection Committee for the award

Website of the Indian Sociological Society

A website was created in 2003 under the leadership of Professors D N Dhanagare, Harish Doshi and Jacob John Kattakayam to make the entry of our Society in the cyber world So far it has been functioning with volunteer support of Professor Kattakayam The process of transition is about to be completed so that the central office of ISS may take charge of enlarging its capacity to provide enough space for the RCs, *Sociological Bulletin*, Regional Sociological Associations, *ISS Newsletter*, etc We have proposed some amount of money to meet the requirements of maintaining the website on a regular basis We have also received a modest amount of financial support from the ISA to enlarge our website and we express our gratitude to the ISA for the help

The ISS Newsletter

The *ISS Newsletter* started in June 2002 has so far brought out ten issues with limited financial liability to the Society It was sustained solely on advertisements in the last four years But, we need support for it

urgently Editor Professor Kattakayam deserves all praise for the tedious work of collecting the material and bringing out the publication on time

National Office of the Society

The Managing Committee meeting on 19 March 2006 in Delhi had decided to establish an ISS Building Fund with call for contributions The fund (Rs16,000) was established with the initial contributions from the members present in the MC meeting A Task Force was appointed to pursue the relevant authorities for allotment of land for ISS building with Professor Anand Kumar as Convenor, and Professors P K B Nayar, U B Bhoite, I P Modi and Ravinder Kaur as members

We are pursuing the matter most vigorously A proper application for land allotment to ISS by Delhi Development Authority (DDA) was submitted in May 2006 A delegation of ISS, headed by Professor T.K Oommen, met the Chief Minister of Delhi Smt Shiela Dixit on 14 August 2006 and the Chief Minister's office has assured all support to the Society for it The President and the Secretary also met the officials of the DDA on 14 November 2006 As per the instructions, a detailed application was submitted to the DDA

But, can the ISS build its national headquarters with Rs16,000? It is necessary to mobilise financial resources for realising this project It is important that each life member of ISS contributes at least Rs1,000 for the Building Fund in the next few months so that we have enough money for paying for the land in Delhi

In the meanwhile, the ISS has also taken initiative to rationalise the arrangement of our Central Office and Guest House with the co-operation of the Institute of Social Sciences The President and Secretary have been engaged in it so that we have a satisfactory arrangement till our Society is able to transfer the central office from the premises of Institute of Social Sciences to our own building in near future

We have also received positive feedback from the ICSSR in the context of our application for the annual Grant-in-Aid for the maintenance and development of the Indian Sociological Society, which is one of the professional associations of sociologists in India

Regional Associations

Even though several regional sociological associations are functioning in our country only eight are affiliated to the ISS They are Marathi Samajshastra Parishad, Uttar Pradesh Samaj Shastra Parishad, North-West Indian Sociological Association, Kerala Sociological Society, Sociological Association of West Bengal, Mangalore Sociological

Association, Rajasthan Sociological Association, and Chhattisgarh Sociological Association I request the office bearers of all other regional associations to get affiliated with the ISS There is need to seek cooperation of senior sociologists in establishing state-level associations in the provinces without such bodies to become more effective and better coordinated body of sociologists of India

We are happy to report that the sociologists of Uttar Pradesh have again come together by completing the merger of their two associations due to the initiative of the central leadership of ISS We thank Professors Satyendra Tripathi, J S Verma, Mohammad Noor, R N Dvivedi, P N Pandey, Rajesh Mishra and Dr Ravi Prakash Pandey for their co-operation in it We are also in active contact with sociologists of Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka for activating links between their professional bodies and the ISS

Networking with Other Countries' Sociological Associations

Our association has taken steps to create intellectual links with the sociological associations in other parts of the world also The President and Secretary have completed dialogues with representatives of CODESRIA (apex body of the social scientists in Africa), South African Sociological Association, German Sociological Association, Austrian Sociological Association and the Nepalese Sociological Association The process of promoting continuous dialogue among the sociologists of South Asia is already in its second phase under the leadership of Professor P N Mukherji and Dr Ravinder Kaur

Interaction with Other Social Sciences

The ISS has initiated a process to create a common agenda for meeting the professional needs of the social scientists of India by engaging in interaction with the leadership of other social science associations A major breakthrough was achieved through a round table of sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, historians and economists with the members of the Managing Committee of ISS at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi on 19 March 2006 We are happy to report that three of our past Presidents – Professors Yogendra Singh, T K Oommen and P N Mukherji – participated in this exercise

Approaching the Policy Makers for Support for Social Sciences

The Jaipur workshop of ISS (30-31 October 2006) has taken serious note of rapid deterioration of the departments and institutions of sociology

The practice of contract teaching, franchising, not filling the vacancies of teaching posts for years and lack of resources for growth of new specialisations were underlined as the indicators of the new trend Therefore, the ISS has conveyed the concerns of the sociologists of India to the policy makers in the academic and political world through a letter of alert The letter was sent to thirty-two major policy makers and government leaders at the centre and the provinces We have already received responses from a number of authorities including the Chairperson of UPA Mrs Sonia Gandhi, Governor of Gujarat, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, etc

Focus on Young Sociologists

Recognising the increasing challenges for our young sociologists in these difficult times, the ISS has taken a bold step by organising a special workshop for them as the pre-Conference programme to promote their interest and commitment in pursuing sociology with excellence Unless such efforts are repeated at the regional and local levels we will not do justice with our duty towards the new generation We hope that young sociologists workshop may become a regular feature of ISS annual conferences

Railway Concession to AISC delegates

Looking at the increasing cost of participation in annual conference of ISS, we have approached the Ministry of Railways to grant travel concession to our delegates to attend the annual conferences in future We hope that there will be a positive response from the concerned authorities as ISS is one of the largest registered academic body of sociologists of India

IV

Friends, since the last Managing Committee meeting in Delhi in March 2006, seventy-one Life Members and 122 Ordinary/Student Members have joined the Society In addition, a few applications are pending with the office for clarifications from the applicants This is a record number in the history of the ISS and many more are desirous of joining the Society This, we know, is a tangible result of the growing popularity that the Society gained because of its achievements, in particular the launching of the website and the *ISS Newsletter*

Since we last met in March 2006 in Delhi, we have lost some distinguished life members Shri S N Ranade (New Delhi), Dr Y B Damle (Pune), Dr R N Thakur (Delhi), Professor Kumar Suresh Singh (Delhi), Dr C Parvathamma (Mysore), Dr Jose Muricken (Calicut), Dr S D Badgaiyan (Delhi), Dr M Michael Ames (Canada), Dr Arthur Emmanuel Punit (Dharwad), and Dr D Sivakumar (Varkala) We mourn their sad demise, pay our respects to the departed souls and hereby convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families

I would like to place on record my sincere gratitude to Professor P K B Nayar, President of the Society He has inspired every one with his deep sense of commitment and dedication in strengthening the Society At every stage of my work, as Secretary of the Society, his constant encouragement and whole-hearted support has been a source of great inspiration I also wish to thank Professor U B Bhoite, Treasurer and members of the Managing Committee for their sincere cooperation and valuable support My job would have become very difficult without constant support from the outgoing office bearers of the ISS, Professor Mukherji and Professor Kattakayam

Before I conclude, I wish to record my sincere gratitude to Dr George Mathew, Director, Institute of Social Sciences for his willing and continuous cooperation in running the office of the Society from the Institute In spite of the growing pressure of the needs of his own Institute, he continued his cooperation for the functioning of the Society office from the premises of the Institute There are few issues that are in the process of getting sorted out between us We both are aware that it is a 18-year old meaningful interrelationship and it has to be our endeavour to keep this bond strong and growing I am thankful to Mr Krishnan Namboodiri for his untiring efforts in efficiently managing the office of the Indian Sociological Society besides his regular work of the Institute of Social Sciences For the dedication of Mr Madhu Nair, Mr S S Arumugam, Ms Vidya, Mr Amrendra Kumar and all other staff of the Institute, the Society is ever thankful to them I also want to thank the Centre for the Study of Social Systems of Jawaharlal Nehru University and its staff for their kind cooperation in my engagements as Secretary of the Indian Sociological Society

V

Let me complete this report by sharing two of the secrets with you about Indian Sociological society as it exists today to help ourselves to decide about what is to be done in the next year First secret is that the Indian Sociological Society is the largest national association of sociologists in

Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and Australia We are the third largest society of sociologists in terms of numbers after American Sociological Association and International Sociological Association But we are still in the stage of transition from 'a growing association to a sustainable organisation' due to lack of complementary growth of our infrastructure and logistical resources Our financial resources, our logistical support and our infrastructural capacity – all are very fragile We are growing from strength to strength every year since our inception in 1951 in the realm of ideas and activities But, other systemic requirements are asking for our active engagement with the Society – ranging from the state agencies, the university system, research establishments to the corporate world, social movements and the global community of social scientists Let us begin it with each of us – the life members and ordinary members of the ISS Let us pledge that we will contribute a little of our time and money in the next 365 days towards strengthening of the ISS so that we have a large list of our accomplishments to be reported at the next General Body meeting at the next All India Sociological Conference at Dharwad

Please send your personal contribution of Rs 1,000 for the *Sociological Bulletin* and, at least, Rs 1,000 for the Building Fund in next few months as the first step Secondly, please contribute to strengthen the local and regional associations of sociologists also in your area and region very soon You can add at least a few more life members from your network of colleagues, friends and associates in India and abroad

The second open secret is that you have given the responsibility of secretaryship to a person of my modest capacity and resources I am alone responsible to fulfil the duties of a post which has been held by much eminent sociologists like H V Ferrira, K M Kapadia, M S A Rao, A M Shah, P C Joshi, Yogendra Singh, Y B Damle, D N Dhanagare, Suma Chitnis, Partha Nath Mukherji, T K Oommen, B S Baviskar, S L Sharma, Aneeta Minocha and Jacob John Kattakayam in the last 56 years The job is further complicated because I have to work in the company of a restless soul like the President Nayar and experienced Treasurer like Professor Bhoite But the job has become a bit easier because of the presence of a variety of engaged and extremely competent sociologists as members of the Managing Committee and as convenors of twenty-one Research Committees

I feel humbled by incapabilities but by your capacity and co-operation together we have many ambitions and expectations for *Sociological Bulletin*, *ISS Newsletter*, ISS website, ISS Research Committees and our regional affiliates We call upon each one of the members of the Indian Sociological Society to help your Society to make a quantum

jump in the next few months We have to be positively active to be able to resist the negative trends against the teaching and research in the field of sociology and common needs of practicing sociologists

We need sociology for a better society in India and the world and sociology needs us for being more relevant and significant for the making of a just and humane world by recognising and resolving the dilemmas of an evolving nation-state and a globalising humanity through meaningful application of our sociological knowledge

Let me conclude by alerting you that the proponents of liberalisation of economy and commercialisation of knowledge are inclined to wish away the presence of sociology and sociologists On the one hand, we have to deepen our roots in the society and on the other bring together all the social scientists on a forum for stopping this drift in the colleges and universities of India

Thank you

Anand Kumar
Secretary
Chennai, 26 December 2006

SOCIOLOGICAL BULLETIN

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Index to Volume 56, 2007

Articles

Author(s)

Arora, Vibha Assertive Identities, Indigeneity, and the Politics of Recognition as a Tribe The Bhutias, the Lepchas and the Limbus of Sikkim, 56 (2) 195-220

Burawoy, Michael The Future of Sociology, 56 (3) 339-54

Chattopadhyay, Molly Sub-Contracting System and Women Workers A Study of Mica-Manufacturing Industry of Jharkhand, 56 (2) 289-307

Dahiwale, S M Aboriginal Businesses and Entrepreneurship in Canada Towards Economic Self-sufficiency, 56 (2) 263-87

Ghosh, Arun Kumar The Gender Gap in Literacy and Education among the Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand and West Bengal, 56 (1) 109-25

Gupta, Namrata Women Research Scholars in IITs Impact of Social Milieu and Organisational Environment, 56 (1) 23-45

Ilavarasan, P Vigneswara Is Software Work in India Task Fragmented? A Study of Software Workers in Bangalore, 56 (3) 383-400

Jain, Sheena Bourdieu's Theory of the Symbolic and the Shah Bano Case, 56 (1) 3-22

Kosaka, Kenji A Sociology for Happiness Beyond Western versus Non-Western Perspectives, 56 (3) 369-82

Malakondaiah, M and K Radhakrishna Murty Street Gangs in Guntur A Study in the Sociology of Deviance and Crime, 56 (3) 414-25

Nayar, P K B Sociology's Quest for 'Society' An Enquiry into the Current Pursuits and Needed Concerns in the Discipline, 56 (2) 171-94

Patel, Tulsi Informal Social Networks, Sonography and Female Foeticide in India, 56 (2) 243-62

Ray, Sthitapragyan Gram Panchayat and Health Care Delivery in Himachal Pradesh, 56 (1) 88-108

Shah, A M Purity, Impurity, Untouchability Then and Now, 56 (3) 355-68

Sooryamoorthy, R Microcredit for Microenterprises or for Immediate Consumption Needs?, 56 (3) 401-13

Taylor, Steve, Manjit Singh and Deborah Booth A Diasporic Indian Community Re-Imagining Punjab, 56 (2) 221-242

Teotia, Manoj Kumar Strengthening and Sustaining Vitality of Urban Areas The Case of North-West India, 56 (1) 65-87

Yuhlung, Cheithou Charles Matrilateral Cross-Cousin Marriage among the Chothe of Manipur, 56 (1) 46-64

Title(s)

A Diasporic Indian Community Re-Imagining Punjab *(Steve Taylor, Manjit Singh and Deborah Booth)*, 56 (2) 221-242
A Sociology for Happiness Beyond Western versus Non-Western Perspectives *(Kenji Kosaka)*, 56 (3) 369-82
Aboriginal Businesses and Entrepreneurship in Canada Towards Economic Self-sufficiency *(S M Dahiwale)*, 56 (2) 263-87
Assertive Identities, Indigeneity, and the Politics of Recognition as a Tribe The Bhutias, the Lepchas and the Limbus of Sikkim *(Vibha Arora)*, 56 (2) 195-220
Bourdieu's Theory of the Symbolic and the Shah Bano Case *(Sheena Jain)*, 56 (1) 3-22
Gram Panchayat and Health Care Delivery in Himachal Pradesh *(Sthitapragyan Ray)*, 56 (1) 88-108
Informal Social Networks, Sonography and Female Foeticide in India (Tulsi Patel), 56 (2) 243-62
Is Software Work in India Task Fragmented? A Study of Software Workers in Bangalore *(P Vigneswara Ilavarasan)*, 56 (3) 383-400
Matrilateral Cross-Cousin Marriage among the Chothe of Manipur *(Cheithou Charles Yuhlung)*, 56 (1) 46-64
Microcredit for Microenterprises or for Immediate Consumption Needs? *(R Sooryamoorthy)*, 56 (3) 401-13
Purity, Impurity, Untouchability Then and Now *(A M Shah)*, 56 (3) 355-68
Sociology's Quest for 'Society' An Enquiry into the Current Pursuits and Needed Concerns in the Discipline *(P K B Nayar)*, 56 (2) 171-94
Street Gangs in Guntur A Study in the Sociology of Deviance and Crime *(M Malakondaiah and K Radhakrishna Murty)*, 56 (3) 414-25
Strengthening and Sustaining Vitality of Urban Areas The Case of North-West India *(Manoj Kumar Teotia)*, 56 (1) 65-87
Sub-Contracting System and Women Workers A Study of Mica-Manufacturing Industry of Jharkhand *(Molly Chattopadhyay)*, 56 (2) 289-307
The Future of Sociology *(Michael Burawoy)*, 56 (3) 339-54
The Gender Gap in Literacy and Education among the Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand and West Bengal *(Arun Kumar Ghosh)*, 56 (1) 109-25
Women Research Scholars in IITs Impact of Social Milieu and Organisational Environment *(Namrata Gupta)*, 56 (1) 23-45

Discussion

Challenging Western Paradigm on Social Knowledge *(B B Mohanty)*, 56 (3) 435-38
Let Sociology be Sociology *(Rajesh Gill)*, 56 (3) 430-35
M N Srinivas, Max Weber, and Functionalism *(A M Shah)*, 56 (1) 126-33
Old Issues and New Global Contexts *(Maitrayee Chaudhuri)*, 56 (3) 438-40
Plea for an Open, Accommodative Syllabus in Sociology *(Dalia Chakrabarti)*, 56 (3) 441-44
Response to Shah *(T N Madan)*, 56 (1) 134-35
Universalising and Indigenising Social Knowledge Breaking the Western Hegemony *(Namrata Gupta)*, 56 (3) 426-30

Book Reviews

'A constituency suitable for ladies' and other social histories of Indian elections by Wendy Singer (*Suhrita Saha*), 56 (3) 468-69

An aging India Perspectives, prospects and policies, edited by Phoebe S Liebig and S Irudaya Rajan (*Kiran Puri*), 56 (1) 157-59

Caste, hierarchy, and individualism Indian critiques of Louis Dumont's contributions, edited by R S Khare (*Ramesh Bairy T S*), 56 (1) 161-63

Child spacing and reproductive health in rural Karnataka, India From research to action, by Inge Hutter, N V Rajeswari, J S Hallad and B M Ramesh (*R. Venkataratnam*), 56 (2) 312-13

Colonial and post-colonial geographies of India, edited by Saraswati Raju, M Satish Kumar and Stuart Corbridge (*Abdul Shaban*), 56 (1) 163-65

Colonializing agriculture The myth of Punjab exceptionalism, by Mridula Mukherjee (*Gaurang R Sahay*), 56 (2) 317-20

Contesting fundamentalisms, edited by Carol Schick, JoAnn Jaffe and Alisa M Watkinson (*Kulbir Kaur*), 56 (1) 138-40

Democracy, pluralism and conflict, edited by M N Kama (*R. Saravana Raja*), 56 (3) 457-59

Freedom and destiny Gender, family and popular culture in India, by Patricia Uberoi (*Kulwinder Kaur*), 56 (1) 154-56

Gender and the digital economy Perspectives from the developing world, edited by Cecilia Ng and Swasti Mitter (*Anita Dash*), 56 (1) 140-42

Gender, conflict and migration, edited by Navnita Chadha Behera (*Madhu Nagla*), 56 (1) 150-52

Images of the world Essays on religion, secularism, and culture, edited by T N Madan (*Rama Shyam*), 56 (2) 331-32

Imagined Hinduism British Protestant missionary constructions of Hinduism, 1793-1900, by Geoffrey A Oddie (*M. Rajivlochan*), 56 (1) 144-45

India's globalization Evaluating the economic consequences, by Baldev Raj Nayar (*Balkrishna V Bhosale*), 56 (3) 449-50

Keywords Nature, by Chen Shao-Ming, Nader El-Bizri, Leo Marx, Jean-Bernard Ouédraogo, Vinay Kumar Srivastava and Pierre Zaoui (*Akhilesh Ranjan*), 56 (1) 142-43

Life and words Violence and the descent into the ordinary, by Veena Das (*Rowena Robinson*), 56 (3) 466-67

Local democracy in India Interpreting decentralization, by Girish Kumar (*M John Joseph*), 56 (2) 310-11

M N Srinivas The man and his work, edited by P K Misra, K K Basa and H K Bhat (*Nita Mathur*), 56 (2) 320-22

Media and mediation, edited by Bernard Bel *et al* (*Deepak Kem*), 56 (3) 451-52

Modernity, globalisation and identity Towards a reflexive quest, by Avijit Pathak (*Rajesh Gill*), 56 (1) 136-38

Narrative of the village Centre of the periphery, edited by Jasbir Jain (*Manish Kumar Thakur*), 56 (2) 313-15

Participatory citizenship Identity, exclusion,inclusion, edited by Ranjitha Mohanty and Rajesh Tandon (*Biswambhar Panda*), 56 (2) 324-26

Poverty,gender and migration, edited by Sadhna Arya and Anupama Roy (*Pushpesh Kumar*), 56 (3) 461-63

Power matters Essays on Institutions, politics, and society in India, by John Harriss (*Anirban Sengupta*), 56 (2) 315-17

Religion, identity and nationhood, by Paramjit S Judge (*Satish K Sharma*), 56 (1) 152-54

Role and image of law in India The tribal experience, by Vasudha Dhagamwar (*Rukmini Sen*), 56 (1) 165-67

Social and gender analysis in natural resource management Learning studies and lessons from Asia, edited by Ronnie Vernooy (*Aditya K Mishra*), 56 (1) 159-61

Social reality and tradition, edited by Bijoy H Boruah and Ramashanker Misra (*Nita Mathur*), 56 (3) 455-57

Sociology of globalisation perspectives from India, edited by Sakarama Somayaji and Ganesha Somayaji (*Antony Palackal*), 56 (3) 464-66

Sociology of organisation Strategy for removing poverty, by Jaspal Singh (*Indu Shekhar*), 56 (1) 148-49

Talking India, Ashish Nandy in Conversation with Ramin Jahanbegloo (*Renu Addlakha*), 56 (2) 308-10

The family in India Structure and practice, edited by Tulsi Patel (*Abha Chauhan*), 56 (2) 332-35

The grassroots of democracy Field studies in Indian elections, edited by A M Shah (*Nikhlesh Kumar*), 56 (3) 445-47

The partition motif in contemporary conflicts, edited by Smita Tewari Jassal and Eyal Ben-Ari (*Satish Saberwal*), 56 (2) 326-28

The politics of autonomy Indian experiences, edited by Ranabir Samaddar (*Nikhlesh Kumar*), 56 (2) 322-24

The social and the symbolic, edited by Bernard Bel *et al* (*Vineetha Menon*), 56 (3) 452-54

Tribal development in India The contemporary debate, edited by Govinda Chandra Rath (*Susamma Isac*), 56 (1) 146-48

Urban studies, edited by Sujata Patel and Kushal Deb (*Laxmi Narayan Kadekar*), 56 (2) 328-30

Urban women in contemporary India A reader, edited by Rehana Ghadially (*Sawmya Ray*), 56 (3) 459-61

Women heroes and dalit assertion in North India, by Badri Narayan (*Vandana*), 56 (3) 447-49

Profession

Secretary's Report (2006) – *Anand Kumar*, 56 (3) 471-82

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